PAPERS ON THE RUMANIAN PEOPLE AND LITERATURE

BY

M. BEZA

LECTURER AT KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON UNIVERSITY

WITH A PREFACE BY

M. GASTER, Ph.D.

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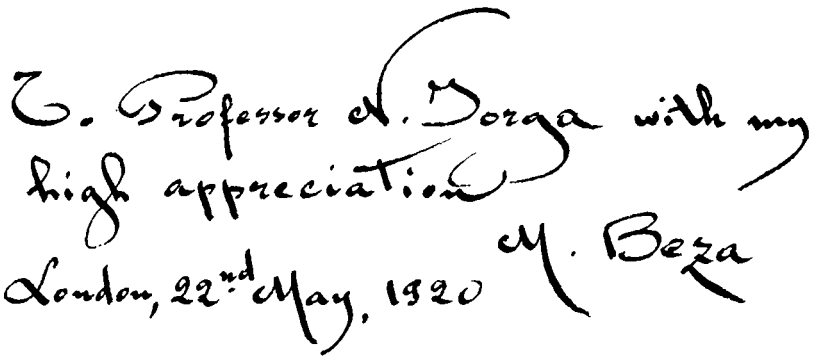

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PREFACE

In less than a hundred years Rumania has been transformed almost beyond recognition. When the curtain rises about 1820 with the revolution of Tudor Vladimirescu, Rumania is still a vassal of Turkey, divided against itself into the two principalities of Vallachia and Moldavia, united only once under Michael the Brave, and then again violently torn asunder, jealous of one another, and often fighting one another. It is ruled by princes of foreign birth and foreign traditions: the language of the Court and of the higher classes is mostly Greek. The Church, not yet entirely free from the old Slavonic influence, is now more Greek than Rumanian; the cloisters are filled with Greek monks, and the literature is a pale reflex of the flickering light of the Byzantine brought from the Phanar in Constantinople by the Greek princes. The mist of the Middle Ages is still hanging over the country, and every attempt to dissipate it is severely punished as high treason. The Rumanian language itself is despised; the peasants, like the serfs in Russia, are a helpless prey to the rapacious tax-gatherer; the Government is autocratic in the extreme.

Such was the spectacle Rumania presented even a century ago, and now Rumania marches at the head of the civilised nationalities of Eastern Europe. Scarcely any trace of the past has been left. Almost too ruthlessly has everything been swept away which could remind the

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present generation of the state of things prevailing only so short a time ago. Everything has been changed. The race for the new civilisation has been almost breathless. The time has not yet come for calm reflection, or for a proper consideration of the spirits that were moving, and of the forces that were driving the Nation in that rapid change.

It is sufficient to remember that the battle of letters was there of more primary consequence than any Western nation could realise. The entire literature was written in the old Slavonic alphabet, which on the one hand created a barrier between East and West, and on the other contributed greatly to the misunderstanding of the character and origin of the Rumanian nation and its language. A battle had therefore to be fought out before the adoption of the Latin alphabet had become an acknowledged fact. Joined with it came a Latinising wave which swept with exceptional intolerance over the country. Everything was to be of Latin origin. Almost an inquisitorial tribunal was established over the language. Every word not believed to be of Latin origin was to be forcibly eliminated. A philological Index Purgatorius was drawn up. A peculiar language was created out of the original remaining words mixed up to a large proportion with exotic words from the Italian and the French. The result was that an abyss was created between the artificial language of the town pundits and the vast mass of the population.

Happily, in the nick of time, the Fairy Queen of Folklore came to the rescue of the poor folk. She waved her magic wand and all these fantastic creations crumbled to pieces. The true voice of the people was heard over the din of the battle carried on by the pedants, and the perennial spring of popular song and melody became now the source

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of inspiration of a new school of poets and writers. They drank deep out of that well of popular inspiration and rejuvenated the spirit of the Nation. They moreover went to the Folk for the genuine, unadulterated, plastic and virile language which the masses had happily preserved, unaffected by the theories which swayed some scholars and politicians. For, let it not be forgotten, politics and dim aspirations went hand in hand with those " Latinisers " of old. The historical perspective had become warped, and science had become the handmaid of politics. Here again the purer atmosphere of forests and mountains dissipates the fumes rising from the heated atmosphere of the town.

Slowly a calmer spirit is beginning to dominate; the confused views hitherto prevailing are slowly giving way to a clearer conception of realities. A new school of scholars and thinkers, of poets and writers, is arising in Rumania which looks upon the vagaries of the past as so many infantile maladies through which the Nation in its rebirth had of necessity to pass. They have a wider outlook, a deeper understanding, of that specific civilisation which is so characteristic of the nations of Eastern Europe, of the rich spiritual gifts which these nations possess, and of the immense contribution which they could make to the civilisation of the West.

One of the foremost representatives of this new school, so promising for the future, is Mr. Beza, the author of this book. He has sketched in an admirable manner some of the principal events which led up to, and some of the forces which have powerfully contributed to, the profound change that has taken place in Rumania. The contrast between past and present could not be more clearly brought out

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than by the scant allusions gathered up with so much diligence by Mr. Beza from the English travellers to whom the Rumanian principalities were often only objects of mere passing interest, and the absorbing desire for fuller knowledge now evinced everywhere for Rumania, people and country alike. But Mr. Beza soars still higher in his masterly description of Rumanian popular poetry, including in it also the work of some of the modern poets. A truly poetic spirit breathes through these pages, and carries the reader with him into the realm of spiritual beauty, depth and loveliness.

Mr. Beza by his work has well deserved of the Rumanian nation, of which he gives such a faithful picture, and of the English readers who owe him a deep debt of gratitude for his illuminating and inspiring book.

M. GASTER.

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NOTE

THREE of the papers printed here were delivered as lectures at King's College, London University; the other three—namely, "English Travellers in Rumania," "English Travellers on the Vlachs," "The Rumanian Church"—appeared first in the *English Historical Review*, *Notes and Queries*, and *Challenge*, respectively. A shorter version of the "Folk-Poetry" appeared also in the *Balkan Review*. I wish to express my thanks to the editors of all the periodicals mentioned above for their kindness in having published these papers.

M. B.

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PAPERS ON THE RUMANIAN PEOPLE AND LITERATURE

I

THE RUMANIAN CHURCH

THE exact period and circumstances under which Christianity was brought into the regions once forming Dacia cannot be ascertained. It was not connected with any historical or legendary event which might have helped us to determine the date of its introduction. Presumably not a few among the Roman colonists established in Dacia were Christians. Though inscriptions to show this are rare, the Rumanian language is in itself effective evidence. Indeed, words expressing the fundamental notions of the Christian religion, such as *Dumnezeu* (God), *biserica* (church), *cruce* (cross), and so forth, are of Latin extraction. Another proof is to be found in the *Acta St. Demetrii*, where the second book speaks of a Christian and Latin people to the north of the Danube. The reference is made in relation to the Slav invasion, which more than any previous one had caused a great disturbance in the Balkans. The Christian communities in Dacia were cut off from any intercourse with Rome or Constantinople.

By the ninth century the Slavs themselves became Christians. Then, favoured by circumstances and inspired by the peculiar zeal of new converts, they managed to impose upon the Rumanians their own form of worship, as taught by Cyril and Methodius. For a long time after this the

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Rumanian Church remained directly dependent on Slavonic centres like Preslav and Okhrida.

Of any distinct ecclesiastical organisation on this side of the Danube one does not hear till 1234, when a letter of the Pope mentions a number of bishops. He terms them *pseudoepiscopi*,* hinting thus at their intransigency towards the Roman Church, for on many occasions he tried to secure their allegiance. It seemed as if he were to attain a permanent success in this direction when he recognised the claim to an imperial crown put forward by the Vlacho-Bulgarian ruler Iohannitius. But conditions changed then so rapidly, with the exception only of the obstructive spirit between the two heads of the Roman and Orthodox Churches, whose rivalry did not abate even before the growing menace of the Turks. It is not surprising that the Rumanian princes, so exhorted on either side, found themselves sometimes in a rather embarrassing position. Alexander Bassarab, for instance, in the middle of the fourteenth century, while asking the Patriarch to send a Greek Metropolitan to Wallachia, was in the meantime promising the Pope his help for the Catholic missionaries. Despite this equivocal attitude, his name is attached to the building of the first church in the Byzantine style at Curtea-de-Argesh.

In the ensuing period the Turkish conquest drove across the Danube a number of Slav monks, the most notorious being Nicodemus, a disciple of the Mount Athos school. He introduced monasticism into Wallachia by founding two monasteries, to which, under the patronage of the Voyevodes, many others were added in the course of time throughout and beyond the two principalities. Erected amidst well-chosen surroundings of natural beauty, in a picturesque variety of styles, with old memories and legends floating about them, some enshrining the sleep of their long-dead founders, these monasteries are to the present day one of the most characteristic features of the country.

* N. Iorga, *Istoria Literaturii Religioase a Românilor*, p. 8, Bucureşti, 1904.

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Their cloisters were from the first devoted to the patient work of copying manuscripts, some of which, both in quality of script and flowery ornament, exhibit a high level of artistic skill. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a certain monk, Macarie, came from Montenegro to the town of Târgoviste in Wallachia, where he established a printing-press and made good use of his typographical knowledge by producing various religious works of a Venetian craftsmanship.

One has to bear in mind that these were all in the Slavonic language, because, like Latin in the West, it was considered most suitable for the Word of God. The idea of communicating it in the native tongue had only been revived by the Reformation, which found at the time a very propitious ground in Hungary. Its adherents, of either the Lutheran or the Calvinist confession, began to translate religious books into Rumanian for the purpose of converting the people in Transylvania. The leaders of the Orthodox Church in Wallachia and Moldavia, on the other hand, brought out their own translations to counteract them. And this exchange of books on both sides of the Carpathians produced not only a beneficial ferment of ideas, but served also to strengthen the consciousness of a national unity.

Though Slavonic books continued to appear now and then, those in the vernacular became more frequent in proportion to the increased need of spreading the teaching of Christianity. To what extent they succeeded in this, one can hardly appreciate nowadays. It is true they did not greatly alter the mentality of the people, save for certain golden threads in the rich texture of their folklore, rendering it far more interesting. Yet how well they responded to the spiritual cravings of those days! What prospects of hope they opened to many a sorrow-stricken heart!

As soon as the native tongue began to take its due place of honour, there set in a powerful Byzantine influence to which it was compelled to succumb for a time. Greek became the language in church, and the two Metropolitans of the principalities were entirely under the Greek Patriar-

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chate. That of Wallachia, as shown by the title bestowed on him—namely, " Exarch of the whole of Ungro-Vlachia " —had also under his jurisdiction the Orthodox Church of Transylvania—a potent factor in maintaining the intercourse between people of the same race. But the Transylvanian clergy and their flock were deprived of any sort of rights. When, therefore, in 1700 the Roman Catholics offered them, in the name of the Austrian Emperor, some very alluring advantages in exchange for their recognition of the Pope, a part of the clergy accepted the overtures. So it happened that the Rumanians of Transylvania split into a Uniat Church and a Church that remained faithful to Orthodoxy, of which Constantin Brâncovanu, Prince of Wallachia, was then a great defender. He encouraged and supported by his riches the publication of books, the building of beautiful churches, and all that made for enlightenment. He gathered round him men of learning, such as the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Chrysanthe Notaras, or the Patriarch of Antioch, under whose supervision books of devotion in Arabic were printed for the use of Christians in Syria. In all these Brâncovanu only pursued a tradition which had ever been held in esteem by the princes as well as the Rumanian boyars. Most liberally they lavished grants of land and money upon the monasteries in the Levant—those of Jerusalem, and Meteora, and Salonica, and Mount Athos. On reading any account of the last named—as, for instance, Robert Curzon's *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*—one is struck by the repeated references: " This shrine was the gift of Neagulus, Waywode of Wallachia "; " The monastery was rebuilt by Stephanus, Waywode of Moldavia "; or " Alexander, Waywode of Wallachia, was a great benefactor to this and other monasteries," etc.

At one time they were even so led astray by their generosity as to give all the Rumanian monasteries, overcrowded with Greek monks, into the care of the brethren of Mount Athos. They mistook, no doubt, for a holy institution what in reality was but a self-seeking organisation of men who, except for the conventional black robe, had nothing

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ST NICOLAS CHURCH AT CURTEA-DE-ARGESH, THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

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religious about them. Recruited at random, generally from the worst elements of the population, some of them—as revealed by an official inquiry—had never learned the alphabet, and others had forgotten it since they entered the Church.* Could such individuals care for the spiritual needs of the people? On the contrary, they reduced the condition of the peasants employed on the extensive estates of the monasteries to something worse than slavery. And year by year they carried away all the gold of the crops to be spent upon quite other than religious purposes.

The first ruler of the United Rumanian Provinces, Alexander Cuza, saw the danger lurking in all this, and, with his noble courage, he decreed the secularisation of the monasteries. Followed thereupon some years marked by a bitterly resentful attitude on the part of the Œcumenical Patriarch towards the Rumanian Church, which was at last declared autocephalous, retaining with him only such relations as were in line with the spirit of the Church.

* Pompiliu Eliade, *De l'Influence Française sur l'Esprit Public en Roumanie*, p. 34, Paris, 1898.

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II

NATIONAL UNITY OF THE RUMANIANS

Tradition ascribes the foundation of both Wallachia and Moldavia to princes who came over from Transylvania about the fourteenth century. In fact, they actually succeeded in uniting under their sway various self-organised communities such as were also to be found on and beyond the Carpathian slopes as well as in Upper Greece. Whether called *Celnicate*, as in the last-mentioned region, *Cnezate*, or *Voivodate*—all three names being of Slav origin—they had as their basis a similarity of character, which naturally evolved in the course of time and survived long after their incorporation into larger political entities. Of the exact relations between these kinds of autonomous tribes, one knows little. But it would be a fallacy to consider them as having always had their centre in what afterwards constituted the Danubian Principalities, since three centuries earlier it was the Great Wallachia of Thessaly that first came into prominence. All one can say with reasonable certainty is that in the far-distant past they must have lived in very close contact; for by no other means can that striking common structure of the Rumanian dialects be explained. Even after the different invasions, a certain intercourse was continually going on between the severed groups of the Rumanians. It would suffice to mention such instances as the great fairs in the Balkans where they used to meet; among the Vlachs there is still alive the memory of the very numerous caravans wandering beyond the Danube in Wallachia and Austria-Hungary; while shepherds in Transylvania keep to this day their old habit of wintering down in Dobrudja with their flocks. As far

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back as the fifteenth century one finds a Byzantine chronicler like Chalkokondilas writing that the "Vlahi," either from Pindus, Thessaly, or Dacia, are all of the same stock, and they speak a tongue akin to the Italian.

But my concern here is to see when the Rumanians themselves first awakened to the sense of a racial unity; how and to what degree this consciousness, together with that of Latin origin, influenced their literature, rendering it national, capable of expressing both past and present life, and opening also a vista towards their far-gleaming ideals.

At the dawn of their history the Rumanians appear to have been closely connected with the Slavs, whose language they shared for Church and State purposes. Under the Turkish pressure many a worthy member among the Slav clergy took refuge in Wallachia—first of all being Nicodemus, a monk of Mount Athos. He founded before the end of the fourteenth century two monasteries, of very humble beginnings, which, however, prospered, and, owing to the generosity alike of the princes and the boyars, their number was gradually much increased. Some of these monasteries soon developed a handwriting school of a high degree of achievement, judging by the models in parchment with ornamental designs, coloured pictures, and flowered initials, which have come down to us. Such, for instance, is the *Evangeliar* of Nicodemus, to be seen at the Museum in Bucharest; another fine example is the *Tetravangel* at the Bodleian Library, the first Moldavian manuscript of the kind, dated 1429. Whether written by the monks themselves or by scribes, they were the product of the same pious desire to set down the Word in Slavonic or both in Slavonic and Greek, two languages which seemed to them suitable, as much as the Latin in the West, for this sacred purpose.

While some of those in the monasteries busied themselves even with the compiling, also in Slavonic, of brief historical notes, the differences that broke out in the Church already began to penetrate into Hungary, alike in the Hussite, Lutheran, and Calvinist confessions. Their new

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adherents, among whom were not a few of high standing, partly out of zeal and partly for political reasons, embarked on a propaganda, more or less sustained at various periods, for the conversion of the Rumanians. And it is to this proselytising movement that one owes a number of manuscripts and books in the language of the people by whom they were meant to be read. A Rumanian version of Luther's Catechism appeared at Siblu in 1544. About twenty-five years later the printing-press at Brashov brought out the *Gospels* and many more books, to which were added those published at other Transylvanian centres, such as *Palia*, containing the Genesis and Exodus, the *New Testament*, and so forth. All these, together with a considerable number of similar works which they provoked in response from the defenders of Orthodoxy in Wallachia and Moldavia, though mere translations, helped greatly in the moulding of the literary language, and, what is of more import to our present purpose, they displayed traces of a certain tendency towards national unity. Thus Barlaam, the Metropolitan of Moldavia, in the Preface to his *Carte Românească*, claims to have written it for " the entire Rumanian folk of everywhere." This is shown with still greater emphasis by the Metropolitan of Transylvania, Simeon Stephen, in his Introduction to the *New Testament*. Knowing that the spoken language varies slightly in different districts, he strives to write in a manner to be comprehensible to all; and if some should fail to understand, " the fault," he says, " rests with those who scattered the Rumanians through other lands."

Such observations are by no means the isolated opinions of a few persons, but rather an expression of what was dimly felt by the people at large. Indeed, the Carpathians were never a very serious obstacle to them. They were frequently included within the limits of the same overlordship, and, when politically divided by the mountains, we find them seizing every favourable occasion for the expression of their mutual sympathy. Hungarian chroniclers are quite illuminating on this point. Szamoskösy, for

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instance, referring to the events after the defeat of Andrew Bathory in 1599, says: " The Rumanians, who occupy the whole of Transylvania living in the villages, having revolted, united themselves with the Rumanians from beyond the mountains."*

No doubt the Transylvanian peasantry saw in the invaders only a kindred people to whom they were bound, not only by old, unimpaired traditions, but by a common tongue. A Jesuit missionary, who passed through Transylvania in 1586, declares that he was obliged to preach in Rumanian in order to be understood by the people; in his own words: " Coactus sum illis concionari valachice, lingua illorum."† This Rumanian language, used always in their home life and daily intercourse, began at this period to find its way into the various documents of an official character. An order extant, issued, among others, by Michael when Voyevode of Transylvania, in 1600, is in Rumanian. And the general exchange of letters, manuscripts, and printed matter across the Carpathians was to a certain extent fostered by the fact that all through the seventeenth century the Metropolitan See of Alba Julia, Transylvania, depended upon the Archbishopric of Wallachia.

Naturally, a language like the Slavonic, with its powerful hold upon the Church, could not easily be replaced. Books in it, therefore, continued to appear for some time. But a further step towards the elevation of the Rumanian language was made by the printing at Bucharest, in 1688, of the *Bible of Sherban*—so called after the name of the reigning Prince, who caused it to be translated by a body of learned men. In their task, the latter utilised some of the previous versions produced either in Transylvania, Wallachia, or Moldavia. This and other circumstances attending its publication concur in showing the work as highly representative of the national unity, upon which due

* N. Iorga, *Histoire des Roumains de Transylvanie, et de Hongrie*, vol. i., p. 259, 1916.

† *Bulletin de l'Institut pour l'Étude de l'Europe Sud-Orientale*, i., p. 169, Bucarest.

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stress is laid in the Preface by saying that it is given "for the benefit of all as a gift to the Rumanian nation."

The period extending over the reign of Sherban Cantacuzen and his successor Brâncovanu is marked by cultural pursuits largely due to foreign influences, among which that of Venice can be clearly traced in the craftsmanship of the various printings, in the church inscriptions and graceful ornaments wrought in stone. Constantin Cantacuzen, great steward of the Court and one of the most influential men of his day—to whom the English traveller Edmund Chishull pays a well-deserved tribute by describing him as "skilled in the controversies of their own Church, as well as in the several liberal sciences"*—had been educated in Italy. A few notes he wrote, while a student, refer to his professors and the objects of his interest at Padua and Venice. In this last city there were established then a number of Vlachs of good standing. From conversations with them one may assume that Cantacuzen must have been surprised to hear of those numerous Vlachian villages scattered on the hills of Macedonia, Epir, and Thessaly. This knowledge doubtless widened his idea of the race as much as did the experience of some among the more educated of his countrymen, who happened to cross the frontiers into other parts inhabited by Rumanians.

Of more consequence had been the relations with Poland. Many rich Moldavians went to stay in that country or sent their sons to Polish schools. It was the contact with Polish literature that led a boyar like Luke Stroitch to sign his name and even to publish a paternoster in Latin characters.† This was, indeed, in the nature of a sporadic attempt, since the Slavonic alphabet continued to be in general use for a considerable time. And it gave way to the Rumanian only by slow degrees, so much so that books published in the fifties display a curious mixture of Slavonic, Latin, and even Greek characters. As late as in

* *Travels in Turkey and back to England*, p. 79, London, 1747.

† Reproduced in M. Gaster's *Chrestomatie Română*, vol. i., p. 39, 1891.

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о фіѫл меѫ

Петре ѭатъ къ'цї трітіц короана, сѫргѫчѫл шї diadimeле, пентрѫ къ тѫ'тї ераї стѧлапреа теа чеа ѭфлоріть, de каре пѫрѫреа съ ѫтбреа шї съ ръкорѣа окіі меї, ѭар акѫш стѧлапреа теа с'аѫ ѫскат, шї флоріле еї с'аѫ вещежіт шї с'аѫ скѫтърат, ш окіі меї аѫ рътас аршї шї пърліцї de жалеа ѭфлоріреї тале. О ѫбітѫл тєѫ Петре!

RUMANIAN TEXT IN MIXED CHARACTERS, REPRODUCED FROM "INVĂȚĂTURILE LUI NEAGOE BASSARAB," PRINTED IN 1843.

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1860 we find the British Vice-Consul at Focshani writing in a report: "I have received from the authorities of Focshani communications in four different and distinct characters."* It was also from the reading of a Polish poet that Dosophtei, the Metropolitan of Jassy, received the idea of writing the first Rumanian *Psalter in Verses*, published in 1673.

Apart from such particular cases, Polish literature was then dominated by the spirit of the Renaissance—not in its prime; indeed, rather like the pale reflection of a setting sun, but still retaining not a little of its stimulating power. Those among the learned Rumanians who came into touch with it were thus induced to think of the origin of their own people and again to affirm the connection with Rome, as Iohannitius had done centuries before in his letters to Pope Innocent III. And if such claim on the part of the Vlacho-Bulgarian King might perhaps be attributed to an ulterior motive, no doubt of any sort is to be cast upon the simply worded contentions put forward in the chronicles—first by Ureke, then by Miron Costin, at greater length and with far more care. What he set out to develop in the *Book of the First Colonisation* could summarily be seen from a few verses of a Polish poem published in 1684, where, referring to the provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania, he writes: "In all three people are proud of the name of Ruman, nor can one doubt that they originate from Rome."

To Miron Costin's arguments, the chronicler of Wallachia, Constantin Cantacuzen, adds the point of the persistence of the Roman colonies in Dacia, and also his greater knowledge of the Vlachs, with some of whom, as I have mentioned, he had spoken himself while at Venice. Only a fragment of his chronicle is known, the purport of which, however, the clear view of the race as a whole, is sufficiently shown in the following passage: "Rumanians are understood to be, not only these over here, but also those of Transylvania, who are even more truly so, and the Mol-

* Record Office: Consular Papers, Turkey, No. 1516.

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davians, and all who are found elsewhere and speak this same language."

Higher than his predecessors stands Demetrius Cantemir. His *Othman History*, of European repute, appeared first in English, translated from the author's Latin manuscript and accompanied by a biographical sketch, in which mention is made of Cantemir's *Ancient and Modern History of Dacia*, written in Rumanian. For what was his main object in this latter—that is, to insist on the latinity of the Rumanian people—he accumulated and used an astounding wealth of material, drawn from many sources in no less than twelve different languages. In *Descriptio Moldaviæ*, another of his works, he devoted for the first time a whole chapter to the "lingua Moldavorum."

This school of chroniclers—to which belonged also Ion Neculce, a man not of learning, but possessed of a natural gift of style and gossip—would have achieved great results had it not been for the continuous political troubles in both principalities, as well as for the overwhelming Greek influence in its dry, pedantic phase. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that circumstances rendered it possible to be revived in the Rumanian regions beyond the Carpathians.

After the annexation of Transylvania by the Austrians, a Catholic movement was initiated, stronger than any of the earlier attempts, for the conversion of the Rumanians. The promises made them, on behalf of the Government, were of too alluring a character not to have been the subject of serious consideration. And by the beginning of the eighteenth century, in spite of the great efforts of Brâncovanu, then Prince of Wallachia and stanch adherent of Orthodoxy, the union with the Church of Rome became an accomplished fact. Thus one of the aims of that propaganda—namely, the suspension of religious intercourse between the subject people in Transylvania and their kinsmen across the Carpathians—was successful. But not entirely, as part of the Rumanians remained true to their own Church. To these

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were added a great number of Vlach emigrants, who, on account of commercial relations as well as of unbearable conditions in Turkey, went to settle in Austria-Hungary. They took with them an enlightened national feeling, which is manifest, not only in their distinct religious communities of Vienna, Budapest, and other towns, recognised as such and often referred to in books printed at their own expense,* but also in various official documents of those days. There is one, among others, in the State archives of Budapest, dating from the middle of the eighteenth century, in which they clearly assert the Latin origin of their people and their tongue, " quæ," as the document runs, " ab ipsis appellatur Romana, ipsique inter se Romani dicuntur et nominantur."† At the press established in Vienna by the brothers Pulliu, who appear to be themselves of Vlach descent, there was published in 1787 a book in the Vlachian dialect, but in Greek characters, under the Greek title of Νέα Παιδαγωγία, a short, simple reading primer, most noteworthy, however, for its evident national tendency. The author, Constantin Ucuta, a priest then at Posen, opens it with the following earnest words addressed to all of his own compatriots in the far-away villages of Turkey: " Accept this little light for the good of our people, as you have for long been eager to see his commencement in our nation."

Such manifestations on the part of the Vlachs had, no doubt, a certain share in the awakening of Transylvania, which was mainly due, curious as it may appear at first sight, to the very movement of the Catholics. These, after the union of the Churches, in order to foster their purpose, founded schools for the new converts, accepted them in the seminary of Santa-Barbara or the Pazmanien College in Vienna, and even sent to the Jesuit Institute *de Propaganda Fide* in Rome two of the Rumanian students, George Shincai and Peter Maior. They both happened to be

* Such are, for instance, Basile Papaeftimiu's Ἱστορία συνοπτικὴ τῆς Ελλάδος, Vienna, 1807; D. N. Darvari's Ἐπιτομή τῆς ἱερᾶς Ἱστορίας τῆς ἐκκλησίας, Vienna, 1830.

† Per. Papahagi, *Scriitori Aromâni*, p. 20, Bucuresti, 1909.

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remarkable men, and their mere presence in the ancient city stirred their intellectual faculties. In their innermost hearts they felt proud to be the descendants of those whose glorious past they were beginning to see for themselves, in books or in the very eloquent monuments and ruins around them. At the same time, not a little humiliation tinged their exalted frame of mind as they realised that their people were being actually kept in a condition almost of slavery in Transylvania. Hence their subsequent attitude. Instead of fulfilling the purpose for which they were sent to Rome and becoming Catholic preachers, they became preachers of nationalism. On his way home, Shincai met in Vienna Samuel Micu, a congenial spirit, with whom he brought out *Elementa linguæ daco-romane sive valachicæ* in 1780. Afterwards all three devoted their activities to the writing of various linguistic and historical works, which had the twofold object of showing the national unity and the Latin origin of the Rumanians. This they did from a broader standpoint than the previous chroniclers, who had chiefly been concerned with one or other of the provinces. Furthermore, they adopted a challenging attitude, because at many points they had to combat different erroneous assertions put forward to serve political ends or even to justify Magyar domination.

Soon the influence of what was termed the Transylvanian School began to be largely felt. One finds at this period that Vlachian books appearing at Vienna or Budapest use the Latin characters, following the example set by Shincai in his Grammar of 1783, which was but a Rumanian version of the one he had published with Micu.

Transylvanian professors like George Lazar passed over into Wallachia and Moldavia, where they ministered to the new ideas, followed by disciples of whom the most zealous was Eliade Rădulescu. On the whole, this school of the Transylvanians contributed much to the national awakening, but—apart from other exaggerations to be accounted for on the part of the spokesmen of a long-oppressed people—it upheld the erroneous idea that the language was an

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artificial thing, to be purified or even completely latinised at one's own pleasure. Attempts in such directions, however, had to give way before the sound Western influences to which Rumania was by that time just beginning to be accessible.

In 1866, Alexandri published his volume of *Folk Poems*. This, together with the *Old Chronicles*, edited by Kogălniceanu, constituted a living monument of the vernacular. Their significance, both for intrinsic value and for invigorating effect upon the national literature, was brought home to the public by Titus Maiorescu, who came to represent the critical spirit of the new generation. By his acute argumentative power and unsparing sarcasms he rendered quite untenable the position of the latinisers. It is also to his credit that he applied the standard of high art in the judgment of Rumanian productions. He provoked discussion of many worthy examples drawn from English literature and from other great European literatures, which examples were intended to illustrate points of æsthetics as well as to enlighten the young Rumanian writers, widening their horizon, without, however, detaching them from their own particular founts of inspiration. An article of his upon a minor poet, who wrote in the dialect of Banat, contains the following passage, which shows his views on the subject very clearly: "The development of art is not, as it may appear at first sight, downwards but upwards, . . . and the most highly developed art receives its living sap and vigour from the popular life in all its unconscious *naïveté;* it must, therefore, be national." And fortunately it happened that Maiorescu's teachings were actually realised by a number of writers gathered round the newly founded periodical *Convorbiri Literare*.

Besides Alexandri, there were the tale-teller Creangă, who, preserving in all his work the spirit of the Moldavian peasantry, described with much artistic skill their life, illuminated both by humour and subdued pathos; Caragiale, who gave to the stage the ridiculous types and situations

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resulting from a hasty introduction of Western manners into a society still stamped with an Oriental character; and, above all, the poet Eminescu. In his early youth, either as a student or as a member of a provincial theatrical company, he had occasion to wander about in Bukovina and in Transylvania—which largely accounts for his broad conception of the Rumanian race. His thoughts turned back to the legendary times of the invasions, and he chose to sing the passionate and mystic love of Arald, Chief of the Avars, for the "Danubian Queen." Out of the same past he also evoked the scene of Mircea Voyevod's defiance of Baiazid, to whom he addresses those simple words revealing the moral strength of a small country: "I defend my poverty, and my needs, and my people. . . ." And, coming down to his own time, he called upon the sacred shadow of Stephen the Great to deliver his people, steeped in miseries within and without the frontiers, "from the Dniester to the Tissa. . . ."

It was likewise his appreciation of the fact that they had written in the once-despised vernacular that made Eminescu praise his predecessors; indeed, he extolled them in *Epigonii* above any of his contemporaries, including himself. Nevertheless, how all these, except one or two, pale before him! What a magic there is in his verse! The words link together as by a strange chance, simple in appearance, but suggestive, suffused with emotion creating a new music of their own, and apt of expressing—what had seemed impossible with a language as yet rather uncultivated—the highest thoughts that ever beset a great spirit. That profound, penetrating, overwhelming sadness, which is the dominant note of his poetry, affected all the poets who succeeded him. The most gifted of these, Vlahuță, startled by the accent of his own verse, had to ask at last: "Is it the melancholy of the dying century, the shadow that submerges us at a sunset? . . ."

Gherea, who tried to judge literary products by the proportion of their socialistic ideas, contended that all this was but an echo of the disillusionment prevailing then in

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literature over the whole Continent. The fact is that, for some time, no writer could escape the gloomy side of Eminescu's influence.

Meanwhile, steady progress was made in their respective domains by the philologists and historians. Among the latter there arose, to take a leading part in the literary movement, Professor Iorga, than whom no one was better qualified for such a position. He had no connection whatever with party politics. He spent much of his time in the quest of manuscripts relative to the history of his country at the great libraries and archives abroad. His studies of the Rumanian chronicles and eighteenth-century literature, the result of which he published in two volumes, left him very enthusiastic. He found in the course of his researches vestiges of a native culture enduring amidst the most adverse circumstances. He felt strongly that any original literature should take up the line of those old traditions, and be, likewise, expressive of the whole nation, formed largely by a peasant class. He rallied in a certain measure to Maiorescu's standard, but he brought to the pursuit of his predecessor's ideas a fresh and ardent temperament, which broke out, though rather whimsically sometimes, in a vigorous style, enlivened by flashes of wit, by fiery denunciations, and sustained by a wide and varied amount of knowledge. It is partly owing to his influence that the public has of late begun to take more interest in Rumanian authors, so that even the national theatres of Bucharest and Iassy were able successfully to produce plays inspired directly from Rumanian history and folklore.

All hopes aroused by this movement, generally associated with the weekly review *Sămănătorul*, as well as the hidden potentialities of a nation in full growth, were adequately expressed in a much-discussed article, "Literary Spring," by Professor Mehedintzi, who was soon to take over the editorship of *Convorbiri Literare*. "It is our desire," he wrote, "that this review should nourish and maintain as far as possible one and the same healthful

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literary current over the whole extent of Rumanian speech."* And for this aim he strove, not only by his own well-pondered essays, but by the encouragement of new writers, and by according a greater attention to old remnants of architecture, to those peculiar crosses of wood or stone spread all over the country roads and any such objects that could reveal a sense of native art.

The literature which thus grew up is truly national, since it transgresses any geographical or false political barriers and appeals equally to all Rumanians. It breathes a genuine sympathy for the downtrodden people. Coşbuc, the representative poet of Transylvania, wrote at the same time *We Want the Land*, a most defiant call to revolt of the whole Rumanian peasantry, which in direct power of expression approaches Burns's *For a' that and a' that.* Iosif, the mildest of dreamers, himself a Transylvanian of Vlach paternity, could not repress a deep sigh as he looked after a line of carts at twilight: "Will the star ever rise of these unfortunate folk? . . ." There is the same note of deep humanity in many of the poems of Octavian Goga and other writers.

In the novels of Duiliu Zamfirescu one sees now and again how the kind, God-fearing old boyar gradually disappears, and his place is taken by unscrupulous adventurers of no definite race or religion.

Side by side with this expression of pity goes a bitter comment on politicians and politics, responsible for many of the wrongs committed. In a comedy of Caragiale, *The Lost Letter*, as in Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*, there is a drunken citizen; and as one watches him through the play, one gathers the painful impression that he is the only honest man among all those petty intriguers or speech-mongers, capable of such stuff as the following: "History teaches us that a people which does not advance stands still or even goes back . . ." or "Every nation, every people, every country has its bankrupts. Why should we not have our own bankrupts? This state of affairs is intolerable."

* *Convorbiri Literare*, XLI., January, 1907, Bucureşti.

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The tendency to reflect in literature, not only the brilliant prospects of the nation, but also its darker sides, is nowhere better illustrated than in the work of the last of the great poets, Cerna. In a poem, written some years before the war broke out, addressed *To Peace* as to a deity of great human blessings, he finds that it is yet too early for the Rumanians at least to benefit from peace. Too many old injustices stand in her way. But were these to be redressed and the ideal of the Rumanians to be realised, what then ? Would it be a real peace, if the conditions of life still remain the same—the same dark, immense gulf between two antagonistic classes ? " We are the devotees of the salutary work, but the fruit of our toil is scattered to the winds. . . . O Goddess ! the powerful masters put us in yoke from our childhood; and the years go by in vain, for the house we build is not ours, the land for which we cry and we suffer only buries us. . . ."

Here Cerna has a deeper vision. To the external aspect of political aspirations he adds that of the internal social adjustment, without which no enduring, complete national unity could ever exist.

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III

ENGLISH TRAVELLERS IN RUMANIA

UNTIL recent times English people knew little of Rumania. No farther back than four years before the Russo-Turkish War, in which the Rumanian army took a distinguished part, we find the English Consul in Bucharest complaining that letters sent to that city sometimes went to India in search of Bokhara; and he even tells of a summons from London addressed, "Bucharest, in the kingdom of Egypt." Yet for many centuries there have been Englishmen who travelled to Rumania and recorded their impressions; but their books did not arouse interest. They have only left their trace in vague allusions in other works. Thus Peter Heylyn in his *Microcosmos*,* published in 1625, under the general heading of Dacia gives a fairly correct account of the two provinces which constituted the Rumania of his time, Wallachia and Moldavia (or Bogdania, so called from the name of her first ruler); and from what he says about the language, about the famous bridge built by Trajan near Turnu-Severin, we can see that he was acquainted with books of travel relating to the subject. Edward Brerewood in the *Enquiries of Languages* rightly excludes Wallachia from the countries where the Slavonic tongue is spoken.†

Beaumont and Fletcher mention the hall in the palace of a king of Moldavia, whose daughter, Pompiona, thus greets the knightly guest:

> Welcome, Sir Knight, unto my father's court,
> King of Moldavia; unto me, Pompiona,
> His daughter dear!

* *Microcosmos: A Little Description of the Great World*, pp. 365–6, Oxford, 1625. † *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, ed. 1625, vol. i., ch. i., p. 109.

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though in a previous scene they confuse Moldavia with Cracovia.* Ben Jonson also in *The Silent Woman* alludes to the Prince of Moldavia.† Literary critics have been puzzled by the appearance of this Prince in two English comedies, and have questioned whether he was only a legendary figure or an authentic person who had really been to London, as Ben Jonson says. There are reasons for identifying him with one Stephen Bogdan, whose father, Iancu Sasul, after a troubled rule of three years in Moldavia, fled with his family to Poland. For many years Stephen Bogdan wandered about from Constantinople to Venice and London, seeking for help in order to assert his claim to the throne of Moldavia. William Lithgow, who met him in Constantinople, says:

" I cannot but regret the great loss Sir Thomas Glover, then Lord Ambassador for our late gracious Sovereign King James, received by the Duke of Moldavia, who chargeably entertained him two years in his house, and furnished him with money, and other necessities fit for his eminency. *This Duke or Prince of Bugdania was deprived of his principalities by Achmet*, and fled hither to the Christian ambassadors for relief. To whom, when all the rest refused acceptance, only noble Sir Thomas received him, maintained him, and seriously wrought with the Grand Signior and his counsil to have had him restored again to his lands; but could not prevail."‡

The words we have printed in italics show only the English author's belief in the pretensions of this errant Prince, who ended by turning Turk. Lithgow in his adventurous journeys happened to pass through Moldavia and Transylvania, where he found a friendly people and " the very vulgars speaking frequent Latine."§

* *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Act IV., Scenes 1 and 2; Act V., Scene 3.

† Act V., Scene 1.

‡ *The Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures*, p. 140, London, ed. 1632. A Dutch translation appeared in Amsterdam, 1656.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 416.

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A similar remark concerning the language is made also by Edward Brown, who was the first Englishman to penetrate into Macedonia through regions hardly trodden by foreigners and left us a striking passage about Perlep and Monastir. On his way thither he encountered "many persons, who brought the tribute and a present of hawks out of Wallachia unto the Grand Signior then residing at Larissa."* He did not actually visit Wallachia; but travelling through Transylvania, he noted what seemed to him particularly remarkable, that a great part of those living there "have the commendation to speak generally Latin."†

Earlier than both these travellers was John Newberie, a London merchant, prompted to travel by a wish to see the world. He sailed from Constantinople in the year 1582, and passing by Sissopoli, Varna, he proceeded through Dobrudja to Jassy. He gives interesting notes about objects of domestic use, such as the prices of eggs, different kinds of fish, beef, bacon, and so forth. All these, as well as his details on the preparation of caviare, are much like those given by the French Fourquevaux, who travelled at about the same time.‡ With regard to the aspect of the people, he writes:

"The children go much after the order of India, with small rings of wiar through their ears. And women goe with great knobs of silver hanging upon the upper part of their ears; and with a great roll of linen cloth about their heads, much like a Turkes turban, and upon that a small cloth: and the upper bodies of their garments are set round about with great knobs of silver like buttons. And the yong maids weare their hair pleyted, and thereupon divers pieces of silver hanging: and upon the crowne of the head a round broad brooch of silver set with stones; and their sleeves great and short; and about their arms two great hoopes

* *A Brief Account of some Travels in Hungaria, Servia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Thessaly, Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and Friuli*, p. 45, London, 1673. † *Ibid.*, p. 115.

‡ N. Iorga, in the *Mélanges d'Histoire offerts à M. Charles Bémont*, p. 563, Paris, 1913.

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of silver, and at their girdles five or six paire of knives: and about their neckes they weare nothing."*

This rather picturesque description, which has been considered by some as characteristic of the Rumanian dress, applies only, we should think, to the gipsies.

Some time later, in 1585, Master Henry Austel, who was furnished with a letter of recommendation from the Ottoman Porte, returned to England through Moldavia. He kept a short diary, from which we may quote:

"The 14 of October we came to Jas, the principal town of Bogdania, where Peter the Vaivoda Prince of the country keepeth his residence, of whom we received great courtesy and of the gentlemen of his Court: and he caused us to be safe conducted through his said country and conveyed without coste."†

Far more important had been the meeting of this Peter Vaivoda with William Hareborne, a merchant who was sent by Queen Elizabeth to Turkey in 1582 as an agent for commerce rather than as an ambassador. He left Constantinople after six years, and this is how he relates his journey into Moldavia:

"I departed from Constantinople with 30 persons of my suit and family the 3 of August. Passing through the countries of Thracia, now called Roumania the Great, Valachia and Moldavia, where arriving the 5 of September I was according to the Grand Signior his commandement very courteously interteined by Peter his positive prince, a Greeke by profession, with whom was concluded that her Maiesties subjects there trafiquing should pay but three upon the hundreth, which as well his owne subjects as all other nations answere: whose letters to her Maiestie be extant. Whence I proceeded into Poland, where the high chancelor sent for me the 27 of the same moneth."‡

* *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, ed. 1625, vol. ii., ch. ix., p. 1420.

† Richard Hakluyt, *The Second Volume of the Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. 1599, p. 320.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

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He gives the Latin text of " the privilege of Peter the Prince of Moldavia," the earliest treaty signed between England and Rumania. The original has been searched for in both countries, but has not been traced. The British Consul in Jassy reported on October 1, 1841:

" On enquiring from the present Hospodar, Prince Michael Sturdza, if the treaty existed in the present records and archives of the Principality, His Highness could not positively reply, but seemed to think it might probably have disappeared in the different invasions or revolutions of the country and government."*

In 1702 Edmund Chishull, who had been for three years chaplain at Smyrna, returned homewards in company with Lord Paget. The latter, while Ambassador at Constantinople, had endeavoured to find means to send his letters more easily through the intervention of the Prince of Wallachia. He often alludes to this in his official correspondence, as in 1693, when after explaining how the most convenient way is that of Wallachia, he adds:

" Through the Pr: of Vallachia's hands all our letters must pass to Vienna, as from thence through Gen Veteranies with whom the Prince keeps intelligence, I suppose he will take to forward safely all that comes to his hands for me wherever I am."

After two years:

" I had lately, with some charge and pains began a correspondence with the Pr: of Vallachia by which I had means to pass letters that way, conveniently for a time. . . ."

And again in another report:

" Since I have established a correspondence with the Prince of Vallachia, my letters pass better and more securily, than they could formerly; if his Majesty would be pleased to have a latin letter writ to the Prince of Vallachia and

* Record Office: Consular Papers, Turkey, No. 446.

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therein to take notice of the civilities and kind offices his ambassador here receives from him; the Honour would be very acceptable there and would encourage him to continue his offices; this has formerly been don upon the like occasions."*

Thus he knew beforehand the prince by whom he was to be received with great distinction in Wallachia; and Chishull has left us a lengthy account of their interview, and of the entertainment they had in the palace of the Prince Joannes Constantinus Bassarabas, as he calls him. A passage in his very interesting *Travels* gives the reader a glimpse of the progress of the country at that time:

"The Patriarch lodges in a large *kane*, built by the present Prince; where are large apartments and magazines for merchants, the rent of which may yield about twenty purses *per annum*, and is by the Prince consigned into that Patriarch's hands for the use of the *Holy Sepulcher*. I visited the press of this place, where I found them printing some pieces of devotion in Arabic, under the care of the Patriarch of *Antioch* to be distributed by him about his diocess. Beside this, they were undertaking to print a large folio of the famous *Maximus Hieromonachus*. . . ."†

Chishull may be said to end the first period of English travel into a country not easy of access, the main continental road to the East passing then through Belgrade, Nish, and Adrianople. Later on, with the opening of new roads and the greater facilities for travel, English visitors to Rumania become frequent, and their books are more than of a documentary interest; they contain impressions, often with judicious comments, concerning conditions of life and of the people which have not yet passed away.

In the year 1854 there appeared *Turkey: its History and Progress*, compiled from the journals and correspondence of Sir James Porter, British Ambassador to Turkey from 1747

* These letters are in the Record Office, State Papers, Turkey, vol. xx.

† *Travels in Turkey and back to England*, p. 80, London, 1747.

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to 1762, by his grandson, Sir George Larpent. A chapter in it on "The Trade of the Danubian Principalities" deals with other matters as well. For instance, it describes a tribe of Transylvanian shepherds, called Mokans, whose habits are in many points similar to those of the Vlachs in Epirus:

"The Mokans belong to the Wallachian race, and their mode of life is very simple. They live in earthen houses, are hardened against every sort of weather, dress in coarse linen and sheepskins, and generally live on millet broth (*mamaliga*), the national food of Wallachia. They are still on a very low standard of education, although upon a higher one than their brethren in Wallachia, and have the virtues and vices of nomadising nations."*

At the end of the first volume there is an account of Sir James Porter's journey from Constantinople to London, in the course of which he notes:

"We arrived, June 23rd, at Galatz, a poor village in Moldavia, though the Moldavians call it a town. We were, however, received with a sort of pomp, and they lodged us very tolerably at a convent dedicated to the Virgin. Five days after this we reached Jassy, the capital of Moldavia, in which the streets are formed of boards instead of being paved, nor does it meet Greek vanity in the magnificence of its buildings. We were lodged in what was called a pleasure house, belonging to the Prince; it was out of the town: as to His Highness, we left him to his own grandeur, not caring for the honour, or rather the trouble, of seeing him."†

This was in 1762. Two years later Lord Baltimore set out from Constantinople, taking the same course, through Galatz to Jassy, about which he also writes:

"The streets of *Jassy* are boarded with deal boards, like our floors; the houses are all on one story, low and miserable, and very little better than in the scattered villages

* Sir George Larpent, *Turkey: its History and Progress*, i. 146, London, 1854.

† *Ibid.*, p. 375 f.

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we had from time to time set up at on our journey; they are built of earth, except a few belonging to the principal *Spodars:* in one of these huts, having put up a small mattress bed to lie down on, just as I was closing my eyes to sleep, a large cow, which was on the outside my hovel, wanting provender I suppose, eat off the straw covering of the roof, run her head through it, and through the top of my bed."*

Lord Baltimore had been lodged in Jassy at a convent of St. Antonio di Padua, where the friars could speak Greek, Latin, and Italian; but they knew very little about English and asked " whether England was in London or London in England."

The well-known Orientalist Edward Daniel Clarke, whose books of travel are a mine of information on so many countries, visited Rumania in 1802. While later writers, with far more opportunities of knowledge, have sometimes been so ignorant as to mistake the Rumanian for a Slavonic language, it is creditable for this old traveller to have written:

" Nothing appeared to us more remarkable than the language. It is not enough to say it is nearly allied to the *Latin;* it is in many respects purely so; the difference between our way of speaking *Latin* and theirs consisting only in the pronunciation." †

In a few penetrating lines Clarke gives also a true picture of the Rumanian peasant:

" In the midst of their wretchedness, living in huts built of mud, and thatched with reeds, without one comfort of life, the *Wallachians* always appeared to us to be cheerful. The postillions who drove us were remarkable for their gaiety; aiming at speed even in the deepest mud, and galloping their horses at a furious rate, with shouts and songs, whenever it was possible to do so."‡

* *A Tour in the East* pp. 145–6, London, 1767.

† *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa,* pt. ii., sect. 3, p. 582, London, 1810–1823. ‡ *Ibid.*

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Clarke pursued his journey through Transylvania. Here, for want of personal observation, he refers to and often quotes from Robert Townson, who had been in Hungary nine years before and had published a large book in 1797. At Grosswardein he found the prisons crowded, mostly with Rumanians. We know the reason; but he himself was astonished; and, on inquiring of the authorities, he was told, and repeated without comment, their usual calumny which, coming as it does from the oppressors, has an eloquence of its own:

"The Wallachians are the most uncultivated and ferocious people of Hungary, and justice is obliged to be administered to them in all its horrors. In 1785 they rebelled in Transylvania, and with great cruelty murdered many of the nobility. Their priests, whom they call *Popes*, are uncommonly brutish, and it is calculated that in twenty executions there is always a Pope."*

Here is to be mentioned Lady Craven's book, *A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople*. published in 1789, and well known, through a French translation, in Rumania.

Thomas Thornton, who resided for fourteen years in the British factory at Constantinople, published in 1809 a book on Turkey, a great part of which is devoted to the Rumanian provinces. After describing their geographical situation, climate, and soil, he gives his own impressions:

"I have traversed both principalities in every direction and retrace with vivid pleasure the impressions left by their grand and romantic scenery; the torrents rushing down the precipices and winding through the vallies, the delightful fragrance of the lime flower and the herbs crushed by browsing flocks, the solitary hut of the shepherd on the brow of the mountain, the mountain itself rising far above the clouds, covered over its whole surface, except in the snowy regions, with a deep bed of vegetable earth, and everywhere adorned with lofty and majestic forest trees or with rich and

* *Travels in Hungary*, p. 256, London.

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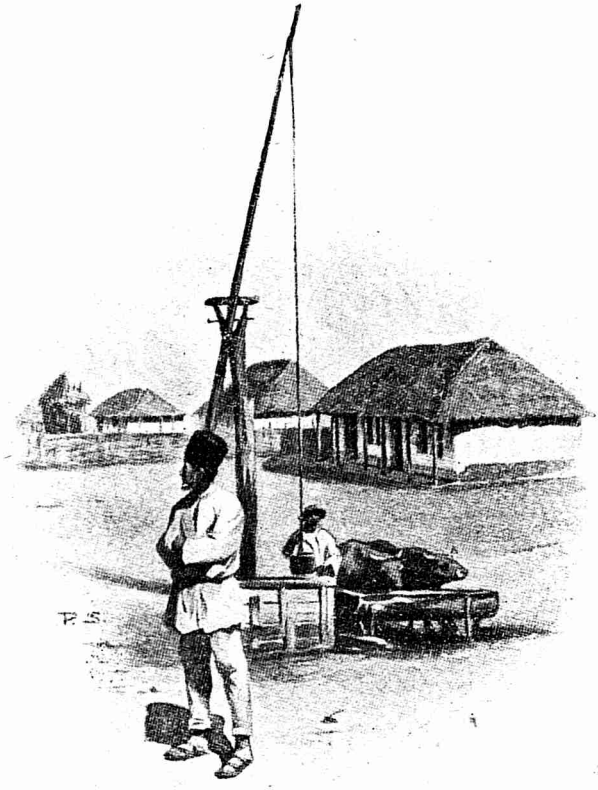

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lively verdure:—all this assemblage of beauty which once gratified my sight, still interests me in the picture which memory retains."*

To this we may add the account of Moldavia given by Adam Neale:

"The face of the country consists of immense undulating lawns called steppes, of great beauty and vast extent, covered with the most luxuriant crops of grass, affording nourishment to herds of sheep, horses, and horned cattle. Their monotonous aspect is only interrupted from time to time by the small round lakes, and sometimes villages of the most primeval character, surrounded by wattle fences, straggling at wide intervals along the grassy brows of the hills—no trees—a few thickets—no hedges, landmarks, or divisions of territory, here and there some fields of maize—hares, coveys of partridges, and other game hopping tamely along the sides of the roads—these roads almost without a pebble, and so smooth that the wheels of the carriage glide silently along, as if on the sandy beach by the shores of the sea. The Moldavian peasants, who are occasionally met driving bullock-wains of the simplest form and construction, are a rough, hardy, and simple race, clad in white woollen, or linen garments, sheepskin caps and sandals—according with every surrounding object to inspire the idea of pastoral life in the very infancy of society, when every image and emotion was simple, peaceful, and innocent."†

The next traveller in chronological order, William Macmichael, has an additional interest for us, beyond that due to his keen observation, in the fact that he is one of the very few who entered Moldavia by way of Bessarabia. He gives a bright description of his visit to the Prince Kalimachi. On his arrival at Bucharest, he saw an elegantly bound book—the political code of Moldavia published at Iassy by the said prince—intended to be sent as a present to the Univer-

* *The Present State of Turkey*, vol. ii., ch. ix., p. 329, London.

† *Travels through Some Parts of Germany, Poland, Moldavia and Turkey*, p. 155, London, 1818.

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sity of Oxford.* To record here what Macmichael and other travellers of his time had to say about the principal aspects of Rumanian life would be simply to repeat statements on which, more or less, they all agree. We gather from them that in both provinces there are two distinct classes: the enduring, hard-working peasants, and a small body of rich people, living in luxury and given over to gambling and intrigues. The two towns of Iassy and Bucharest, to which this latter class are mostly attracted, offer a curious, sometimes grotesque, mixture of civilised manners and Oriental indolence. With regard to the political situation, such was the state of affairs that none could believe in the independence of the provinces; nor could one be aware of the great power of life fermenting there among the mass of the population. Under these circumstances, the British Government did not think it necessary to appoint representatives. In Iassy there was no British Consul before the year 1836. The British Consulate in Bucharest, of an earlier date, had an able chief in the person of William Wilkinson, to whom we owe a valuable book,† which gives a true picture, though now and then in very gloomy colours, of the life at that time.

Many things have changed since. Following on these travellers, it is interesting to see how new influences, new ideas of progress, work out for the making of modern Rumania. The publications on the subject become more and more numerous;‡ and we can here only refer to the book of J. W. Ozanne, which is the most sympathetic. During

* *Journey from Moscow to Constantinople*, p. 92, London, 1819. The whole narrative, concerning us, of Macmichael's journey has been translated into Rumanian by Professor N. Iorga, who likewise utilised some of the works of English travellers in his great *Istoria Literaturii Romîne în Secolul al XVIIIlea.*

† *Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia*, London, 1820. Details on the establishment of the consulates are to be found in p. 183 and also in the consular report, before referred to.

‡ Among the more important are *Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia . . .*, by Sir Robert Ker Porter, London, 1821; *Travels to and from Constantinople*, by Captain Charles Colville Frankland, London, 1829; and *Travels in Western Caucasus*, by Edmund Spencer, London, 1838.

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three years' stay in Rumania he did not keep aloof; he laughed and sorrowed with the people, he drank from their pleasures, he felt the particular charm of Bucharest, that romantic veil which still floats about it—the quiet streets, the white houses lost between gardens, from which spreads the intoxicating perfume of limes and acacias; the sunny days and warm nights full of gipsy songs; and a subtle, inexpressible atmosphere permeating the whole. Therefore he is anxious to advise his countrymen to pause a little and reflect before settling in Rumania, because, says he, " people find it a very hard task to tear themselves away from Moldo-Wallachia. Much though they may dislike it, it still has for them a power of fascination simply unaccountable."*

Writing on the eve of the Berlin Congress, his last pages have a special significance, and the author concludes with the sentence: " Nor should Europe ever forget that Wallachia and Moldavia formed for centuries a rampart against the successive invasions of multitudes of barbarous hordes."

* *Three Years in Rumania,* London, 1878.

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IV

ENGLISH TRAVELLERS ON THE VLACHS

In his note to *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto II., stanza xxxviii.,* Lord Byron says that no Englishman, except Leake, had ever advanced beyond Ianina. The statement is probably true, on condition, of course, that it refers only to Albania, since, long before Byron wrote, Edward Brown had penetrated far into Macedonia. Coming from Servia, Brown saw Perlep, also the mountains near by, "which shine like silver as those of Clissura,"† and on his way to Thessaly he passed through Monastir. Some years later, in 1675, George Wheler met on the hills opposite Lepanto with a settlement of shepherds, and in a short description which he gives of their mode of life as well as of their dress‡ one recognises the same folk about whom Dr. Sibthorp wrote in 1794:

"During the winter months a wandering tribe of Nomades drive their flocks from the mountains of Thessaly into the plains of Attica and Bœotia, and give some pecuniary consideration to the Pasha of Negropont and Vaivode of Athens. These people are much famed for their woollen manufactures, particularly the coats or cloaks worn by the Greek sailors."§

* London, 1819, p. 138.

† *A Brief Account of some Travels in Hungaria, Servia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Thessaly, Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and Friuli*, p. 45, London, 1673.

‡ *A Journey into Greece*, p. 303, London, 1682.

§ Robert Walpole, *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, London, 1817.

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The aforesaid travellers do not name the Vlachs;* they speak in general terms, as do some of the Byzantin chroniclers. Gregoras, for instance, says: Τὰ ἐν Μακεδονία Ῥωμαίοις ὁμοροῦντα ἔθνη, Ἰλλυριοὶ τε δηλαδὴ καὶ Τριβαλλοὶ καὶ Ἀκαρνάνες καὶ Θετταλοὶ, the latter comprising the Vlachs. Cantacuzen likewise alludes to them by saying: οἳ περὶ Θετταλίαν οἰκοῦσιν αὐτόνομοι νομάδες.† Learned men as they all were, it must be presumed that they knew about the Vlachs.

These people, who call themselves Armâni, had a part of their own—at times of paramount importance—in the very tangled history of the Balkans. Beginning with the tenth century, one often hears about them from different sources, including some English, either direct or translated. Thus Benjamin of Tudela's narrative of his journey, with an oft-quoted passage on the "Balachi," appeared in *Purchas His Pilgrimes*.‡ In the same collection of travels William de Rubruquis refers in 1253 to the "Land of Assanus," and, as implied in the words "as farre as Solonia," he means but the Μεγάλη Βλαχία of the Byzantin chronicles.§ From this Vallachia came to London in 1427 a person called Paulus. The king then reigning, Henri VI., granted him an allowance on account of his being ruined by the Turks. The decree issued for this purpose distinctly points out that he is "*Comes de Valache*, in partibus Greciæ qui de Nobile Sanguine Tractus existit."‖ He was probably one of those chieftains who, according to the times and extent of their powers, bore different titles, besides that of "Comes de Valache." We learn from the *Cecaumeni Strategicon* that the Emperor

* There is a mention of them in Thomas Herbert's *Relation of some Yeares Travaile, begvnne Anno* 1626, but it refers to Rumanian colonists in Minor Asia; see *Notes and Queries*, 12, S. IV., 57.

† Ed. Bonn, vol. i., pp. 247 and 450.

‡ Ed. 1625, vol. ii., ch. ix., p. 1441.

§ Vol. iii., ch. i., p. 2. This is the Latin text: "ultra Danubium versus Constantinopolim, Valachia, quæ est terra Assani, et Minor Bulgaria, usque in Solonomam."—Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*, vol. i., pp. 265–6, Bucureşti, 1887.

‖ Rymer, *Fœdera*, 3rd ed., vol. iv., pt. iv., p. 128; vol. v., pt. i., pp. 7–8.

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Basile II. granted to Niculitza τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν Βλάχων Ἑλλάδος ;* later on Niketas speaks of a τοπάρχης ruling over Great Vallachia.†

At the advent of the Turks, Great Vallachia ceased to be a principality apart, but her name, with something of a glamour about it, lingered still through the tradition of the people, as shown by an old folk-song beginning:

Κλαίγουν τἀηδόνια τῆς Βλαχιᾶς καὶ τὰ πουλιὰ στὴν δύσιν . . .‡

and the Vlachs managed to retain their own organisation and local privileges. If during more than three centuries afterwards one meets but few records, the reason has to be sought in the fact that, on the one hand, the Vlachs were in many instances confounded with the various races around them; on the other hand, they had, as they still have, their homes on the out-of-the-way hills, in a country of no easy communications, withal far too dangerous to attract visitors for its own or its people's sake.

There came circumstances of a different nature, such as the interest for classicism, geographical and topographical researches in relation to it, the quest for old books and manuscripts—all these induced English travellers, in spite of many hardships, to venture towards those regions of Turkey and Northern Greece. On their journeys they often encountered nomad tribes of Vlachs ascending to the mountains or going down to the grassy pastures with their sheep and their caravans so picturesque in colour.

Questions that might have arisen with regard to the past of these rather strange people were to a certain extent touched upon in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,§ where many references to the Byzantin chronicles are made.

Out of these as well as other sources, William Martin

* B. Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt, p. 96, Petersburg, 1896.

† Ed. Bonn, p. 841.

‡ "Lament the nightingales of Wallachia and the birds in the West . . ." Passow, *Popularia Carmina Græciæ Recentioris*, p. 145, Lipsiæ, 1860.

§ Ed. 1776–1788, vol. vi., ch. lx. and lxi.

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Leake gave for the first time in England an historical sketch of the Vlachs. Writing at a time when researches were not much advanced as yet, he holds the Vlachs to be "a branch of the same nation, which was found in those ages not only in the fertile country on the north side of the Lower Danube, now generally known in Europe by the name of Wallachia, but likewise in many of the mountainous parts of Thrace."*

From Ianina, his place of residence, Leake made frequent visits to the hinterlands, gaining thus a great insight into Vlach life; and in his *Travels in Northern Greece* —which, though published in 1835, is in the form of diaries written between 1804 and 1810—he enters into such characterisations as this:

"The Vlakhiotes, who, with less native acuteness than the Greeks, are endowed with more steadiness, prudence, and perseverance, are nevertheless, like all republicans, seldom free from intestine intrigues and divisions."

On the approach to a Vlach village, he observes:

"The scene has an appearance of comfort and successful industry seldom seen in Greek or Turkish villages."

Of their dialect he says:

"The language of the Vlakhiote towns of Pindus differs very slightly from that of Wallachia, and contains consequently many Latin words derived from the Latin colonists of Dacia. The Latin words are not so numerous as in Italian or Spanish, but the flexions and the auxiliary verbs in some of their forms are less changed than in any of the daughters of the Latin."†

Leake saw a great many Vlach villages on the ranges of Pindus and Olympus; and he pursued his excursions towards the south, towards Salonica, Seres, and Mount Athos—

* *Researches in Greece*, ch. iii., p. 363, London, 1814.
† Vol. i., p. 282, pp. 280 and 300.

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where Dr. Hunt before him met a number of Vlachs at the monastery of Vatopede*—and towards the Albanian region of Tomor. In the description of this last place his unaffected style does not fail also to convey that sense of seclusion and mountainous solitude in which Vlach settlements are usually found:

" As we advance along the western side of the mountain, the sun becomes visible at short intervals, and lights up portions of the great plain of the Mizakia with the sea beyond it, but these views are soon shut out again by interposing clouds and rain. Just as it becomes dark, we obtain a sight of the village of Tomor or Domor in the highest habitable part of the mountain, and perceive on our right at the extremity of the long rugged slope of the mountain the Castle of Berat and the valley of the River Uzúmi."†

And all through his work there is such a wealth of information, of appropriate quotations from the classics, of penetrating remarks, that it is indispensable for any student of the Vlachs.

Leake was in Janina when Lord Byron got there. From conversations they had together, and from his reading of Gibbon, the poet came to know of the peoples inhabiting those parts. Therefore one would be justified in assuming that verses like

> pensive o'er his scattered flock,
> The little shepherd in his white capote
> Doth lean his boyish form along the rock . . .‡

allude to the Vlach shepherd.

For a more detailed account of the journey, Byron refers to his fellow-traveller J. C. Hobhouse. The latter was acquainted with Pouqueville's work, *Voyage en Morée, à*

* He calls them " Wallachian-Greeks." It was at Easter, 1801. See Robert Walpole's *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey*, vol. i., p. 199.

† Vol. i., pp. 350–51.

‡ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto II., stanza lii.

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Constantinople, etc., Paris, 1805. It was perhaps for this reason that he left aside the Vlach districts already described by the French author, and he only casually mentioned Metzovo, the village of Malacassi, and also the route to Zagori, which, he says, " is taken by the merchants travelling into Wallachia as being more secure than that which leads through the plains of Thessaly by Larissa."*

Shortly after Hobhouse we have the Rev. Thomas Smart Hughes—who published in 1810 *Travels in Sicily, Greece, and Albania*—and Henry Holland. Both are much impressed by the Vlachs and their caravans, the latter dwelling with more length on them. After an interesting description of Metzovo and some historical considerations, Holland gives what seems a very judicious report:

" The insulation and mode of life have tended to preserve them, in great measure, separated as a people; and the Wallachian towns and villages of Pindus, which are very numerous in those parts of the chain between Albania and Thessaly, have all a distinct character, which probably has continued for centuries. The Vlachi are a hardy and active people, more regular, less ferocious in their habits than the Albanians, to whom they are not allied in their origin, and but little as it appears in later connection.

" It may further be remarked that there is an air of active industry, neatness, and good order in these towns which, while it distinguishes them from all others in the south of Turkey, affords a singular contrast to the wild and rugged scenery by which they are surrounded."†

In 1838 appeared *The Spirit of the East* by D. Urquhart. A special interest attaches to this, in his time, most influential political author. A Rumanian statesman and writer of note, I. Ghica, for many years representative to the Court of St. James, knew him well. In a letter he portrays him

* *A Journey through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople*, p. 62, London, 1813.

† *Travels in the Ionian Isles, Albania, Thessaly, Macedonia*, etc., p. 226, London, 1815.

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as " a young man of short stature, delicate complexion, with pale face, long golden hair over his back, blue, piercing eyes;"* and he further speaks of Urquhart's noble character, of his ardour in espousing the great causes for freedom. Indeed, his *Spirit of the East* breathes in a large degree the tumultuous, fiery atmosphere of the Greek revolution. He deals in it with chiefs like Catchiandoni and Tchionga, both of the Vlach race, or, as Urquhart puts it, of " these hardy mountaineers, nowhere fixed, but always to be found where the wolves have dens and eagles nests."†

In some of these travellers' accounts one has to look carefully for the particular passages relating to our subject, as they are intermixed with various other matters.

Robert Curzon, for instance, looking down from the Meteora monasteries at the beautiful prospect stretched before him, and without any further reference, writes in his *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant:*

" The whole of this region is inhabited by a race of different origin from the real Albanians: they speak the Wallachian language, and are said to be extremely barbarous and ignorant."‡

Of course, the author reports only the information conveyed to him, but still it is curious that he did not care to comment on it. His follower, George Ferguson Bowen, whose purpose was in a way to complete the *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*, gives, on the contrary, a sympathetic account, and finds it very interesting " to meet a tribe of these nomad Wallachians on their march, winding in single file with their long trains of packhorses up one of the mountain passes of Epirus, or along the plains of Thessaly."§

To the same period belongs Edward Lear's *Journals of a Landscape Painter in Albania*. It has to be mentioned especially for the illustrations, which he himself contributed.

* *Scrisori ale lui I. Ghica către V. Alexandri*, p. 144, Bucureşti.

† Vol. i., p. 122. ‡ London, 1849, p. 294.

§ *Mount Athos, Thessaly, and Epirus*, p. 152, London, 1852. See also Introductory Remarks, ch. i., p. 3.

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Henry Tozer relates having seen the Vlachs in their summer encampments at the heights between Ipek and Prizrend; and he adds: "These families are completely nomad, having no settled habitation."*

Such roaming communities are to be found in many other places, particularly towards the Adriatic coast, where hardly any traveller has been to seek them.

A limited region of Albania was visited in 1860 by Mary Adelaide Walker, who, passing near Coritza, heard the tinkling bells of the flocks, and caught a sight of their shepherds in "sheepskin cloaks and caps."† On her way to Coritza she was present also at a Vlach wedding ceremony, of which she renders a clear account. In describing further the Bulgarian dresses she refers to a specimen worn by "the women from Vlacho-Clissura." It is surely a mistake; in Vlacho-Clissura, as shown by the name itself, no Bulgarian women are to be found. With regard to the town of Monastir, she writes:

"Among the Christian population of Monastir the Vlachs rank the highest for commercial enterprise, industry and intelligence."‡

G. M. Mackenzie and A. P. Irby in a book published a few years later§ fully agree on this point with the preceding author.

On the whole, English travellers dwell mostly on the nomadic life of the Vlachs and its external aspect, either because it appealed to them as more unusual, or because they came into contact with it on their journeying to Greece. There is, however, another section of these people represented by numerous well-to-do boroughs, scattered on the mountains. Above all in importance stood once Moscho-

* *Researches in the Highlands of Turkey*, vol. i., p. 352, London, 1869. See also his footnotes concerning the Vlachs in Finlay's *History of Greece*, ed. 1877, Oxford, based as they are on a sound personal knowledge.

† *Through Macedonia to the Albanian Lakes*, p. 249, London, 1864.

‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 141–46 and p. 137.

§ *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe*, p. 74, London, 1867.

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poli. It possessed a high-school under the name of Ἀκαδημία, and a printing-house—the second established in Turkey after that of Constantinople—where Vlachian books in Greek character, besides many others, were printed, showing the existence of a national consciousness before any thought in this direction had ever occurred to their kinsfolk of the Danubian principalities. In the Ἀκαδημία were professors like Theodore Cavalioti, author of a Greek-Vlach-Albanian vocabulary and various other works, whom Sathas calls γραμματικὸς ἄριστος.* His pupil, Constantin Tcheagani, a writer himself, in order to improve his knowledge and be thus of more use to his own people, had visited London, Cambridge, and other places of learning.† There was also going on an extensive commerce, mainly with Venice at her period of glory. Vlach folk-songs tell us about long, long lines of caravans passing day and night, laden with silk of all descriptions; and this vague reminiscence of bygone times is amply confirmed by evidences found in the Venetian archives.‡ After the plunder and partial ruin of Moschopoli, its noble traditions were taken and carried on by towns like Krushevo, Vlacho-Clissura, Nevesca, and the large Vlachian colonies in Transylvania.

Rarely, here and there, one meets this side of life being dealt with by English travellers—in Leake, for instance, or in such a passage of Stuart Glennie as the following, which affords a glimpse of a Vlach interior:

"Most snugly furnished, but in Eastern fashion, was the room in which I was installed. There was neither chair nor table, but the floor was covered with thick, richly coloured rugs, the handiwork of the household; and along the wall on either side of the hearth, and under the windows, was a range of comfortable cushions. All the wall opposite the hearth was occupied by a most artistically designed

* Βιογραφίαι, ἐν Ἀθήναις, 1868, p. 496.

† Johann Thunmann, *Untersuchungen über die Geschichte der östlichen europäischen Völker*, vol., i. p. 179, note K., Leipzig, 1774.

‡ In the *Drum Drept*, Nos. 3–6, 1914, Professor N. Iorga refers to many letters of Vlach merchants which he recently examined in Venice.

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VASE WITH VLACH INSCRIPTION (RUMANIAN DIALECT)
IN GREEK CHARACTERS.

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and elaborately carved wardrobe, also of native workmanship."*

A more direct allusion is that by H. N. Brailsford, when he comes to write about Vlacho-Clissura:

"Half its houses are empty, and their architecture, solid, roomy, and with some incipient tendency to ornament, speaks of a greater trade than any that survives. Its comfortable shopkeepers, seated at ease on their cushions within the stout walls that defy the incessant rains of the mountain-top, will tell you that when they were boys Klissoura was the second city of Macedonia, hardly distanced by Salonica."†

I mention but a few of the relatively recent works. One has to be rather careful with these. Since the starting of different propaganda in Turkey, English travellers, though more impartial, could not altogether escape the prevailing turbulent atmosphere. Unconsciously—some even with purpose—they take sides: facts are inverted, figures vitiated; much more so in the case of the Vlachs, who had no separate Church, by which the people were distinguished and classified in the Turkish system. There are exceptions indeed, such as the fluently written, but none the less scholarly book of A. J. B. Wace and M. S. Thompson, *The Nomads of the Balkans*, London, 1914. The authors lived a good deal amongst the Vlachs, to the extent of learning their vernacular tongue. Beyond what they had to say in *The Nomads of the Balkans* they called attention‡ to the fact that, since the way of living and the habits of these people had changed but very little from immemorial times, their study would perhaps enlighten us concerning what had occurred long ago, in the distant past, with regard to which no documents of any kind are available.

* Quoted by Lucy M. J. Garnett in *The Women of Turkey*, vol. i., p. 8., London, 1890. † *Macedonia*, p. 177, London, 1905.

‡ See in *The Geographical Journal*, No. 5, May, 1911, "The Distribution of Early Civilisation in Northern Greece," a paper read by the authors before the Royal Geographical Society.

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V

FOLK-POETRY

About the middle of the nineteenth century, when Rumanian literature was living more or less upon imitations and things exotic, the poet Alexandri published a collection of folk-poems, which registered an immediate success. To both the intellectual world and the general public it proved a revelation, not only of a new and unsuspected charm in the vernacular, but also of an unusual kind of subject-matter. It carried one out of everyday life, to a world so fitly suggested by one of the ballads:

Away ! brother, away ! but not too far away !*

Indeed, not too far away; only to the country-side, amidst plains and hills, where many a legend, many a memory of bygone times still lingered. There the old type of boyar was to be found, who, in his utter loneliness—used as he was to feasting and merry company—would toast to the trees around him:

I will drink to the elms,
The giants of the heights,
For they are ready to respond
And wave in the air
With a cheery rustle of the leaves.

But apart from the romantic, yet native, atmosphere of the poems, what impressed the public more deeply, and has since maintained such hold on them, was their lyrical beauty. Take, for instance, these verses:

* In translating the poems both here and in the next paper, I followed closely the original, verse by verse, but with no thought to the English prosody.

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You asked for honeycomb,
I gave you my lips;
You asked for a violet,
I gave you my heart.

And the answer:

If you would have a burning love,
Bring me your lips untouched,
And bring to me a maiden's heart
Pure as water of a spring.

Also the following, which expresses the wasted days of youth:

All the flowers of earth go to the tomb.
Only the lake-flower
Stands at the gate of Paradise,
To ask of the other flowers,
What they have done with their perfumes.

Or that exhilarating joy at the coming of the birds, coupled with the thought of man's uncertain future:

When I hear the cuckoo singing
And the blackbird whistling,
I do not seem to be on earth.
Sing, cuckoo! Sing to me!
Till next spring, who can tell
Whether I shall live or die—
Man is but a transient dream.

As these folk-poems appeared at a period when interest in such productions was general, they received considerable attention in the West. Men of recognised literary taste, such as Prosper Mérimée, expressed ther appreciation. Translations were published both in France and Germany. In England, Henry Stanley's sympathy for the Rumanians, and his personal acquaintance with Alexandri, induced him to produce the *Rouman Anthology*, a beautifully illustrated book, in which four ballads are reproduced, together with their English renderings. Two years previously, in 1854, Grenville Murray had published a whole volume of prose translations from the Rumanian legends, songs, and

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ballads. But a number of pieces included in this collection were the work of professional writers. The translator, perhaps, failed to distinguish them as such, so well did some writers succeed in imitating the folk-poems. Others, however, had gone to them for inspiration or to enrich their style. In one way or another all had freely drawn from the same refreshing fount, the clear and sweet note of which is to be found in all that is best in either prose or poetry that has since been written in Rumania.

After having indicated the place of these folk-poems in the larger field of Rumanian literature, I will now pass on to their relation with those of other Balkan peoples.

I remember on one occasion, when travelling through some remote districts of Macedonia, at a time when much antagonistic propaganda was being carried on, that my Albanian muleteer, who had guarded silence for a while, suddenly broke out into what seemed to voice his meditations:

"If I were a Sultan I would lay hold of everybody. . . . Look here! What are you? A Greek? Go to Greece! . . . You are a Serb? Go to Serbia! You are a Bulgarian? Go to Bulgaria!" And he waved his hands as if to say: "What a pity I am not a Sultan!"

Something akin to this primitive argument seems to dominate the thought of many writers on the Balkan Peninsula. Its peoples are considered separately, dealt with in each case to the advantage or disadvantage of the others, with scarcely a recognition of their mutual ties. Yet, there are few regions where races are more confused, or where the evidences of such confusion are more strikingly exhibited. To obtain a clearer view of this, one must go back to the Byzantine writers. They found these Balkan peoples something of a puzzle. They could not make out which was which, and they often ended by melting all into a collective mass, rather resembling a many-headed monster. Hence Catrari's lines, dating from the fourteenth century:

"Do you want to know what he is? He is Vlach by birth; Albanian by appearance; and by his manner Bulgar-

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Albanian-Vlach."* In some instances this idea of collectivity is still further developed by the inclusion also of the Serb, as, for example, when a certain Despot of Epirus is stated to have been "Serb-Albanian-Bulgar-Vlach."† True, each one of the parties in this agglomeration emerged later on as a distinct entity, to which none could have attained unless it had possessed throughout its past a potential sense of nationality. However, they all lived for centuries in close contact with one another; the political circumstances which affected them were also more or less of a similar nature. They were equally subjected to such influences as, to mention the most important, the diffusion of Christianity—not Christianity as it is generally understood, but travestied in obvious Eastern garbs of rich and varied colours, imbued with many heretical superstitions and many pleasant vagaries which found their way among the people by way of mouth or by widely read books.

All these facts have to be constantly borne in mind when dealing, as we are about to do, with the choicest, most flower-like growths of the Balkan folk-soil. We shall therefore take a number of characteristic Rumanian legends, ballads, and songs, compare them with parallels—when parallels exist among the other folk-poems of the Balkans—and endeavour to find a common background, while savouring to the full the peculiar essence which belongs to each individual race.

There is a legend in connection with the Argesh Monastery—one of the finest monuments in the Byzantine style—which runs as follows:

Radu Negru, Prince of Wallachia, commands the famous architect Manole to build him a monastery of superior beauty. Manole with his nine master-masons starts work at once. But soon they are amazed and terrified to discover that whatever work they do crumbles down by night. When on the verge of despair, Manole has a warning

* Βουλγαραλβανιτόβλαχος, P. Matranga, *Anecdota Græca*, p. 677.

† Σερβαλβανιτοβουλγαρόβλαχος, *Epirotica*, ed. Bonn, p. 238. See also G. Murnu's *Vlahia Mare*, p. 149, Bucureşti, 1913.

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dream. " Listen !" he explains to his associates; " a whisper has reached me from above that all our efforts will be in vain unless we wall up alive the first woman, either wife or sister, who comes in the morning with provisions." As not only their ambition, but their very safety was at stake—the Prince having given his order on pain of death—they decided that this should be done, and bound themselves by solemn oath.

On the following day, with the first streak of dawn, Manole watches the road anxiously. Afar off, in the fields, someone approaches. It is a woman bringing food to her brother or husband. Nearer and nearer she comes. There is no doubt now—it is his own beautiful wife, Anna. All then darkens around Manole. He kneels down and prays God to let loose the cataracts of Heaven. This is granted; but it is of no avail, and he then prays God to raise a powerful wind that she may be forced back. But in spite of everything she hastens towards her husband, only to find her terrible doom within the walls.

The Argesh Monastery is known to have been erected by the pious Voyvode of Wallachia, Neagoe Bassarab, at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The fact that the poem introduces the name of another shadowy Prince, Negru Voda, would imply that the splendour of the monastery had so struck the imagination of the people as to cause it to be asssociated with a legend current in the Balkans. Indeed, we find the Albanians connecting it with a bridge in Dibra; the Bulgarians with Salonika; the Greeks, as well as the Vlachs, with the bridge of Arta, and the Serbs with the town of Skadar or Scutari. The legend varies among the different peoples, but all its versions have sprung from a common source: the primeval custom of sacrificing a human being at the foundation of a great building. From this rite there has descended a modern superstition to the effect that some person, whose shadow one takes by measuring it with a reed or a string, will die and become after death a *stafie* or *stihie*—that is to say, the protecting ghost of the building.

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If one examines the different versions of the legend as found in Balkan folklore, it will be seen that while the Albanian and Bulgarian versions are rather like unfinished sketches, the Greek version, from which the Vlach is probably borrowed, presents some crude notes, such as the sudden knock upon the head of the woman when approaching the wall, or, as some versions have it, the bridge. Her imprecation at the end does not, in the writer's opinion, tend to heighten the effect of the poem:

> "As my hands are trembling, may the columns tremble;
> And as my heart is trembling, may the bridge tremble!"*

The Serbian and Rumanian versions have a closer resemblance to each other and display a higher workmanship. In both, the young wife in going down to the foundation is full of laughter; she takes it as a joke; only by degrees does she become aware of the fate that awaits her:

> "Manole, Manole,
> Master Manole,
> The wall presses on me. . . ."

But the mallet and trowel do their work mercilessly around her. The wall rises to her waist, to her breast, to her eyes; fainter and fainter is heard her cry:

> "Manole, Manole,
> Master Manole,
> The wall presses on me. . . ."

—until it fades away into a complete submission to fate, which is of a poignant literary pathos.

There is in Alexandri's collection a poem entitled *The Cuckoo and the Turtle-Dove*, of which the following is an abbreviated translation:

"Sweet turtle-dove, little white bird, let us love together!"
"I should like to, but I fear your mother. She is a witch, and she would scold and scold. . . ."
"Dear little turtle-dove, little white bird, do come and be my love!"

* A translation of the legend is given by Lucy M. J. Garnett in *Greek Folk Songs*, p. 81, London, 1888.

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"No, cuckoo, no! Ask me no more; for to be left alone, I will turn into a reed."
"If you turn into a reed, I will change myself into a shepherd. I will find you and make a flute of the reed, that I may play on it and kiss it."
"No, cuckoo, no! I cannot listen to you. Ah! if it were not for your mother! But rather than be with her, I would become a saint's-image in church."
"Even then I will follow you. I will change into a deacon. And there, in the church, I will bow to you and worship you, saying: 'Little saint's-image, turn into a bird again, and let us love and be together.'"

There are numerous variations of this poem, in some of which human beings take the place of birds. Vuk Karadžić, in his *Srpske Narodne Pjesme*, has given us a poem in this latter form. He states that he collected it at Ragusa, where it might have been brought by Rumanian colonists, who had been long established there. I do not know of any specific Greek version, but there exists a very curious one in the regions of Pindus, which is sung half in the Greek and half in the Vlach dialect:

Nă feată mică sumulae
A Turcului lĭ-căzu sivdae:
Κόρη μ' θὰ σὲ πάρω,
Κόρη μ' θὲν σε-ἀφίνω.
Şi feata lĭ-u dzăse,
O, laea-şi di feată!*

And the poem goes on telling, in both languages, of a Turk who had cast an evil eye on a Vlachian girl. She, in order to escape from him, would change successively into a lamb, a partridge, a hind, a fish, a flower; but the Turk in his turn would pursue her everywhere as a shepherd, an eagle, and so forth, repeating obstinately all the time:

Κόρη μ' θὰ σὲ πάρω,
Κόρη μ' δὲν σε-ἀφίνω.

"I will take you, my girl;
I will not leave you!"

The different versions of the poem in question might be reduced to a simple, common type, symbolising the conflict

* Per. Papahagi, *Din Literatura Poporană a Aromânilor*, p. 1035, Bucureşti.

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between a tempting and an innocent spirit. As this kind of dualism was prominent in the old Zoroastrian doctrine of the Persians, and as a variant of the poem itself existed amongst them, it was supposed to have originated in Persia, and to have been brought over to Rumania by such heretical sects as the Manicheans and Bogomils.* The fact is that the poem found its way into many countries. In Provence, for instance, Mistral used it with much literary skill in *Mirèio*. Thence, it was introduced by colonists even into Canada. But there would seem to be no reason for ascribing it to any special source. It is only one example of a whole group of influences which affected Balkan folk-lore, and which were due chiefly to the proselytising movement of the Bogomils, as explained so learnedly by Dr. Moses Gaster in the Introduction to his *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories*. The various metamorphoses recorded in the poem are very frequent in the fairy-tales, and in circumstances devoid of any dualistic tendencies.

Furthermore, there is a Vlach poem of the same category, which shows a girl's earnest desire to reach her sweetheart by surmounting any obstacles—even that of a mother-in-law. I heard it sung at Molovishte, a Vlach village, near Monastir. This is the translation:

"Make no mistake, little girl;
Do not come to us.
Near us there is a great river;
You will not be able to cross it."

"I will turn myself into a fish.
And I will cross the river
And I will come to you."

"Make no mistake, little girl;
Do not come to us.
By us there are lofty mountains;
You will not be able to cross them."

* Hasdeu's contention; see *Cuvinte din Bătrâni*, pp. 502–566, Bucureşti, 1880.

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"I will turn myself into a partridge,
And I will cross the mountains,
And I will come to you."

"Make no mistake, little girl;
Do not come to us.
With us there is a cruel mother-in-law;
You will not be able to live."

"Cruel mother-in-law, good daughter-in-law,
We will get on together,"*

An event which, more than any other, stirred the imagination of the people in the Balkans and supplied rich material for ballad-making, was the Turkish invasion. A veiled, far-away echo of it is to be found in a Greek song relative to the fall of Adrianople, beginning—

Lament the nightingales of Wallachia and the birds in the West. . . .

The verse here refers to the Wallachia of Thessaly, which at that time—the end of the fourteenth century—was declining, whilst a new Wallachia was beginning to grow upon the other side of the Danube. In this latter province many of the Slav clergy, who had fled from the Turks, sought refuge, and, assisted by native princes, they were all enabled to pursue their peaceful activities, thus fostering the Slavonic influence, which had been introduced there long before. The very first ruler of Wallachia, if not a Serb himself, had close relations with Serbia. So did his successors, some of whom took wives from the reigning Serbian dynasty. It was, therefore, only natural that minstrels should also have come from Serbia to sing or recite at the feasts of the princes and boyars in the Slavonic tongue, which was used at that time by the Court and the Church. This may account for the fact that no historical personages previous to the sixteenth century are mentioned in the Rumanian ballads, whereas they are often to be found

* The song has also been heard in a village of Pindus by A. J. B. Wace and M. S. Thompson and given in *The Nomads of the Balkans*, p. 289.

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in the Slavonian. Among the oldest ballads, *Vojvode Radosav Severinski i Vlatko Ydănski*, for instance, refers to the departure from Severin of the Voyvode Radu Negru, who reigned in Wallachia in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. It begins—

Kada mi se Radosave Vojevoda odiljase ? . . .
Where are you off to, Voyvode Radu ? . . .

There is no doubt that in the course of time, during a long period of peaceful contact, some of the Slavonic ballads were assimilated into the Rumanian folklore, which, in its turn, had contributed not a few of its own elements to the Balkan folklore. A ballad called *Bogdan*, in Alexandri's collection, tells how a princely youth had gone to a distant country to ask the hand of a Catholic King's daughter. Before consenting, the King tries to prove the Prince's abilities in various difficult tasks, which he accomplishes, and succeeds in carrying away the Princess in a splendid procession. A version of this ballad, existing also in Bulgarian, is to be found in Karadžić under the title of *Dushan's Wedding*.

Novac, Baba Novac, or Starina Novac, a Serbian chieftain, who fought under the banners of Michael the Brave in Transylvania, is the subject of both Slavonic and Rumanian ballads. These sing, also in common, of popular heroes of the highway, like Donciu—Doitchin—or Grue. Balkan ballads dealing with these latter, who go by the name of *Haiduks* or *Klephtes* in Greek, contain a great many characteristic traits, all tending to represent one and the same type—the product of almost similar circumstances. Thus we find that where oppression is the sole authority, where plunder becomes the rule, where people's homes and lives are unsafe, one of the community invariably rises in despair, gathers round him a band of followers, and takes to the mountains to enforce his own law. This is the *Haiduk*. Always courageous, bold even to the verge of savagery, were he to be judged by other standards than those of his own environment, he would

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purposely throw himself into the most daring enterprises, in order to display his powers, which at times have something of the superhuman in them.

Another of his characteristics is a great love of nature. Now and again one meets, in these epics of the *Haiduks*, with glowing descriptive passages, which bring about us a delightful freshness of hills under the open skies, a breath of green woods, from the first bursting of the leaves to the fullness of their deep, wide summer shadows.

No matter to which Balkan race the *Haiduk* belongs, he stands for them all in his struggle with the Turk. Expressions like " to fight for the Cross," " to free the land from the pagan," often occur in the ballads; one has to be, however, rather careful about the extent of their meaning. The notion of the Turk being of a different religion must have enhanced, indeed, the feeling of hatred, but the *Haiduk* looked upon him primarily as an oppressor, whose place was to be taken later in Rumania by the *Ciocoiu*. A detestable crawling creature this; of no clear extraction, sharing with other low creatures a strong cunning and capacity for adaptation to any circumstances. His breed is not yet extinct. To this day he would exploit the poor and he would be the first to clamour for the protection of the poor; he would trample down the law and he would sit in Parliament to speak in the name of the law; he would commit any wrongs and he would put on himself the garb of Justice to pass judgment on the wrongs. A defiant note of revenge rings against him through the ballads, not less bitter than against the Turk. We hear repeatedly the sinister cry of the crow hovering over the *Haiduk:* " I would drink the blood of a *Ciocoiu !*"

The people are attached to the *Haiduk* with feelings of mixed awe and sympathy. His death leaves a deep impression upon them. The circumstances in which he breathed his last assume a great importance; legends are created. " Gone is the brave !" says one; another repeats, " Gone is the brave !" The news, passing into song, then travels into the remotest corners. And the wind bears it

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from mountain to mountain and bids the woods cease to flourish, and the maidens to wear mourning—for "Gone is the brave!"

There is another cycle of ballads relating to pastoral life, of which the most important is *Mioritza*. A little dark ewe—the pet of the sheep—discloses to his master the secret that two of his associates have planned to kill him. The shepherd does not seem to take any measures to prevent the murder. In a mood of resigned fatalism he only gives instruction as to what is to be done if he dies. He wishes to be buried by the sheep-fold, and near to his head are to be placed his three flutes—the flute of birch-wood, the flute of bone, and the flute of reeds—so that the wind blowing through them may strike forth sweet melodies. Further, he does not want it to be known that he was murdered, but only that he was married to "a beautiful Queen, the bride of the world."

A similar conception of death appears in a Greek ballad *The Farewell of the Clepht*, the translation of which runs as follows:

> Do not say I perished, that I died—poor me!
> Say only that I wedded in the lone foreign land,
> That I took the tombstone for mother-in-law,
> The black earth for my wife. . . .*

Compared with this, how much finer and more subtle is the Rumanian passage. Both in richness of imagery and in the choice of words making for exquisite cadences, the latter version attains a very high literary level. In order to gain some idea of the rhythm, the original Rumanian should first be read:

> Iar tu de omor
> Să nu le spui lor.
> Să le spui curat,
> Că m'am însurat,
> Cu-o mândrâ crăiasă,
> A lumii mireasă;

* C. Fauriel, *Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, tome I., p. 50, Paris.

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Că la nunta mea
A căzut o stea;
Soarele și luna
Mi-au ținut cununa.
Brazi și păltinași
I-am avut nuntași;
Preoți, munții mari.
Pasări, lăutari,
Păsărele mii
Și stele făclii!

Translation.

But thou, do not tell them of the murder; tell them only that I have married a beautiful Queen, the bride of the world; that at my wedding a star fell. The sun and the moon held my chaplets. For wedding-guests I had the fir-trees and the aspens. For priests, the lofty mountains; the birds for minstrels—thousands of birds, and the stars for torches!

Strange words these, in the mouth of a shepherd! But there is a touch of strangeness throughout the ballad. Found in many different forms, mostly unfinished, all agree in indicating the shepherd as a youth of exceptional beauty. We learn from the mother, who runs across the fields, wailing, in search of him, that his face is white as the "froth of milk," his hair dark as "the plume of the raven," his eyes "like blackberries." There would seem to be a strong resemblance between this youth of the lonely pastures—in whose mystic nuptials with death itself all nature takes a share—and that deeply significant creation of the ancients—Adonis, beloved of the goddess of the underworld. In the accents of the mother, too, is there not something of Aphrodite's lament for Adonis? This may, perhaps, be mere coincidence, but the more I think, the more I am inclined to see a certain kinship between the two, in support of which comes also the fact that one or two versions of the ballad have somewhat a religious character, ranking among the Christmas carols.*

We come now to the purely lyrical songs, and in order to discover what is really original in them, it will be first

* M. Gaster, *Literatura Populară Română*, p. 476, București, 1883.

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necessary to make clear the distinction between Rumania proper and the countries south of the Danube. In these latter territories the remains of Turkish influence are more conspicuous. Many churches, for instance, still preserve a special gallery for women, and girls are generally kept in seclusion. In the remote mountain villages, if you happen to be seen by a group of girls, who are sitting talking on the threshold, they will fly at once to hide themselves, like frightened birds. But as you pass on, you are intensely conscious of their warm glances from behind a window or slightly opened door. A youth can but rarely meet a young girl by herself, except at an occasional festival or during those dusky hours after sunset when she hurries to fetch water from the fountain. Then a mere hand-clasp makes for entire happiness; their lips draw together, and the long-wished for kiss is so exquisitely sweet that even the stars cannot help noticing it:

"Maiden, pretty maiden,
When have I kissed you,
That a song they made of it
And everyone is singing it?"

"Last night, beloved, last night!"

"But then it was dark
And none to see us."

"My poor dear lad,
The stars did see us,
And they told the birds,
So that all the village heard
The little one was kissed."

That is a Vlach song; there is another in Greek which resembles it closely, but is more beautiful.

This serious, even severe conception regarding the intercourse between the sexes is emphasised throughout the wedding ceremonials. Shortly after their marriage, the young men go abroad to seek a living—a circumstance that accounts for some of the most inspired songs, full of tears, of deep longing. They speak of the melancholy charm of such things

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as the perfume of withered flowers, the lonely garden left to desolation, and the sad notes of the birds flying round the houses. To this group belongs the Vlach song—

Upon the foggy mountain,
With its black crosses,
There, amongst them, grows
The grey flower of oblivion.
The sheep ascend and smell it
And they forget everything.
Go you too, my own,
To cure your love;
For whatever I may do,
I cannot forget you.

This song, which in the Vlach dialect is complete in itself, forms, with but slight variations, part of a longer Greek song which is full of a deep, haunting beauty.*

It happens sometimes that a man returns to his native village after many years' absence. He arrives unexpectedly, like a wayfarer, so much so that the woman who comes to open the gate, on hearing him declare that he is her husband, is bewildered and asks for a proof. Such is the subject of a well-known song in Vlach, Greek, and Slavonic alike. A version of it is also to be found in Rumania, but this has probably come from the South, since the Rumanian peasant was generally too firmly rooted to his soil to leave it for long.

On the other hand, the Rumanian provinces, owing to historical circumstances and to their geographical position, had been spared the Turkish yoke. They paid tribute indeed, but they had never been subdued in the same way as the other Balkan countries. Thus, the best traditions of learning and culture were continued in Rumania, when they could not be maintained in the other countries. We find, therefore, enlightened princes and boyars in Rumania who heartily support cultural institutions; the printing-presses of Bucharest and other towns turn out books in various languages to be spread throughout the Balkans; and here, also, the first seeds of the later movements of

* See Fauriel, *Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne*, tome ii., p. 210.

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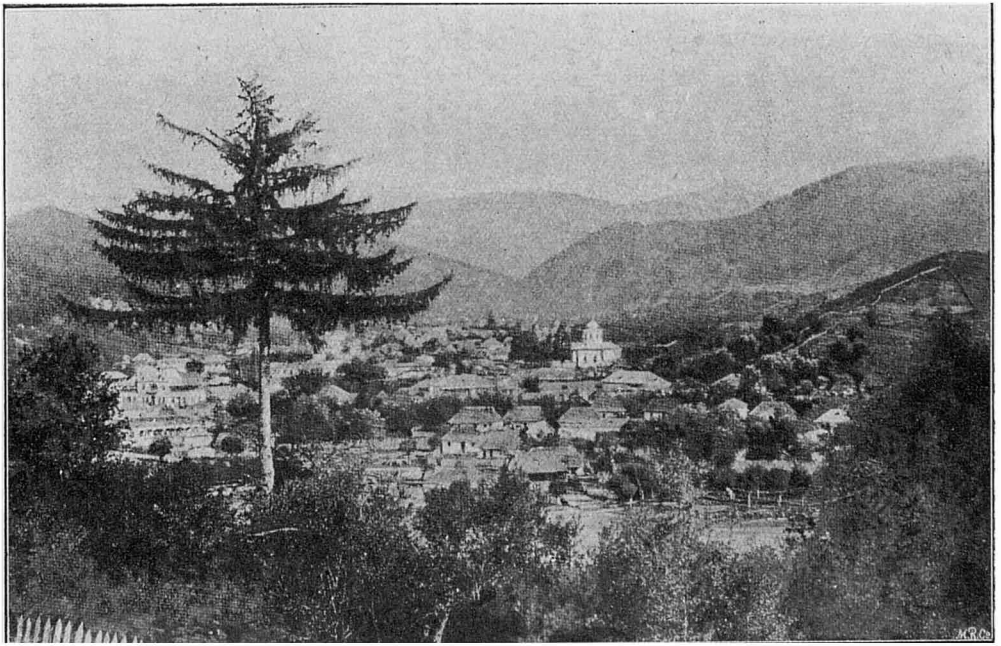

MOUNTAIN VILLAGE IN RUMANIA.

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liberation were sown. It is thus easy to understand why, in the folk-songs, mention is often made of people crossing over to the right bank of the Danube. An old Vlach song makes that river resound with the merry voices of those who sail upon it to Wallachia. A Bulgarian song, again, begins:

Thin drops of rain fall like pearls.
My beloved saddles his horse
To go and get rich in Wallachia. . . .*

Such references are to be found also in the Greek songs, all of which represent it as a prosperous, well-to-do country, far distant, and, like the dragon in the fairy-tale, swallowing up the people who approach it. Whoever sets foot in it returns not again, because of its many temptations. Hence the jealousy of the women who are left behind, which breaks out sometimes in—

May God burn Wallachia !

This view, gathered from the folk-songs, agrees with the accounts of many a traveller in that country. There was something in its atmosphere which worked like a spell upon all who went there; a great capacity for joy, which was retained by the Rumanian peasant even in his utmost wretchedness; a freer intercourse between men and women, which finds expression in songs of a more definitely passionate character. Then, as now, the youth of both sexes met practically every Sunday at the dance. Many villages were renowned for the beauty of their fair ones, and the young men " from seven villages around "—as one would say in Rumanian—would throng to the dance, where there is laughter and merriment and plenty of music—both singing and instrumental music, played by the gipsy bands. To the rhythm of the steps, growing quicker and quicker, are mingled a medley of verses loudly recited, or rather shouted; hence their name of *strigături* or *chiuituri*. A note

* Auguste Dozon, *Chansons Populaires Bulgares*, p. 294, Paris, 1875.

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of wit and satire often runs through them, of which the two following will serve as examples:

Nice she looks, the dear girl,
With her new dress on;
But she would have looked nicer
If it belonged to her!

How white, how rosy-cheeked
You are, my love!
Beautiful indeed
With the colour you've put on.

Another characteristic of the Rumanian songs is their being usually introduced by *Foae verde*, green leaf. It reminds one of the *Fior—Fior de viole, Fior di narciso*, etc.—of the Italians. Might this not be a remnant of the long-lived past of the Rumanian people on the verge of primeval forests, which form an often-recurring element in their folk-songs? I cannot say for certain; but it would be well to notice that the leaf chosen, in most of the really genuine songs, is in relation to, and suggestive of, the particular emotion dealt with in them. I do not know of more than one folk-song south of the Danube, beginning with *Green leaf*, and that is in the Rumanian dialect of the Vlachs:

"Frunză vearde di sicară,
Mi-amiurzează-primăveară."

"Green leaf of rye,
I feel the spring around."

Enough has perhaps been written to show of what strong interest are these folk-poems. Far removed from harsh reality, they afford a true glimpse into the life of the Balkan peoples as a whole. It will be seen that their traditions, their customs and beliefs, are so much alike and intermingled that the fierce quarrels of the last decades give the impression of a horrible nightmare.

Were they guided along the path of moderation and goodwill, instead of being thrown against one another by external influence and intrigue, as has so often been the case

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in the past, they would surely find in themselves and in their own common wisdom the means by which to live in harmony. Fond as each race is of its own liberty, it would learn also to respect the liberty of its neighbours.

In conclusion, I cannot do better than quote a Rumanian folk-song which expresses in a beautiful allegory that deeply rooted belief of the people in their right to live their own life in the world, however humble, without spite or bitterness towards their neighbours.

A vulture is resting on the top of a fir-tree, fluttering his wings in the sun. Through the verdurous foliage of the boughs, he catches the perfume of a strawberry-flower. And he speaks to her thus—

"Little flower of the mountain, come out of the shadow and let me see your face in the light! Pretty little flower, I have it in my mind to take you on my wings and carry you up through the rays of the sun, until you grow ripe and love me!"

"Vulture, sweet-tongued vulture," answers the flower, "each one has his own life; you have wings to rise to the skies; my own destiny is to flourish in the cool shadow. Begone, then, on your way, and do not think of me: the world is wide enough for a bird and for a flower!"

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VI

ENGLISH INFLUENCE ON RUMANIAN LITERATURE

WHENEVER I happened to mention the English influence on Rumanian literature to one or other of the intellectuals in Rumania, they shrugged their shoulders, as if to say: "Is there any?"

This may be accounted for by the fact that such influence does not appear on the surface and is not so evident as, for instance, the French influence. Yet, were one to go deeper into the subject, to search carefully the predominant ideas of the various literary currents, to study the writers of note as well as the books that entered into their preparation, one would find out that, not only does the English influence exist, but it manifests itself even to an unexpected degree.

It is to be borne in mind that, up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, except for short periods of contact with Poland and Italy, Rumania was altogether cut off from the West. Any intercourse, chiefly political, with England was carried on through the English Ambassadors at Constantinople, some of whom showed much concern in the affairs of the Rumanian provinces. At one time it was owing to Prince Brâncovanu of Wallachia that their official letters could be forwarded to England. He felt proud of the service he was thus able to render the British Government, and, in referring to this, Lord Paget points out how flattered the Prince would be to have a letter written to him in Latin by that Government.*

* Record Office: State Papers, Turkey, vol. xx. Lord Paget's letter is dated April 29th, 1696.

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We also learn from the correspondence of Nicolas Mavrocordat, another Prince of Wallachia, with Chrysanthe Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem, that the former was in communication with the Archbishop of Canterbury with regard to religious matters. I quote the passage, which is in modern Greek; I do so the more gladly, as I find in it a praiseworthy precedent of the desire expressed lately in authoritative quarters, both here and in Rumania, for a closer relationship and understanding among the Churches:

*Ἔχομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς κορρεσπονδέντζαν μετὰ τινος ἀρχιεπισκόπου Καντουαρίας ὀνόματι Βιλχέλμους, καὶ γράφομεν ἀλλήλοις ἀμοιβαδὸν; ὅστις εἶναι εἷς τῶν ἐκεῖσε προυχόντον καὶ μᾶς ἔστειλε μάλιστα καὶ μερικὰ βιβλία . . .**

Translation.

We also have correspondence with one William, Archbishop of Canterbury, and we write to each other by turns; he is one of the influentials there, and he even sent us some books. . . .

Later on, the Hospodar Scarlat Kalimachi, having published the political code of Moldavia, sent as homage to the Oxford University a luxuriously bound copy of it, together with an autograph letter, which, though in Greek, bore the Latin address—to the

MAGNIFICO RECTORI,
OXONIUM.

All these, however, were but isolated cases of a few enlightened persons. The bulk of the Rumanian public, even if they wished, had not the opportunity of knowing anything of English culture. The mere name of England rarely occurred in a popular book of imagination such as *Alexandria*, for instance, where it is said that Alexander the Great, in dividing the world, gave England to "Leomedus"; or in a fanciful project of social organisation, dating from the end of the eighteenth century, by a certain Moldavian

* Emile Legrand, *Bibliothèque Grecque Vulgaire*, tome iv., p. 173, Paris, 1888.

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boyar, in which reference is made incidentally to England and her "liberal Constitution."

There were, no doubt, English travellers passing through Rumania. Not knowing the language of the country, I suppose, they were rather careful and preferred to keep quiet. Hence, perhaps, part of the impression left behind, which still pervades, of the English people all being silent and cold and altogether indifferent to what is going on around them.

Very few Englishmen had ever established themselves in the Rumanian provinces. As late as 1841 the British Consul at Iassy, replying to an inquiry from the Colonial Church Society, pointed out that he knew only of two English residents in the whole of Moldavia, and they consisted of the Vice-Consul at Galatz and himself.*

As to the English language and to the extent of its use in Rumania, it would suffice to mention the following case: In 1837 an official note, which, according to instructions given by Viscount Palmerston, was addressed in English to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at Bucharest, had to be returned by the latter, with the request that such communications should always be accompanied by translations into the French language, as there was no one at the Ministry who could understand English.†

At the outset of the nineteenth century, owing to more propitious circumstances, many Rumanians of the richer class began to travel to the West, where young men were likewise sent for the purpose of studying. A newspaper, *Curierul Românesc*, gives in 1829 the names and destination of twenty such students. None of them found his way to England. It is true that, after two years, a student, Peter Poenaru, who was later to be the organiser of Rumanian schools, paid short visits to London, Manchester, Glasgow, and other towns. He drew up a report on his visits, but,

* Record Office: Consular Papers, Turkey, No. 446.
† *Ibid.*, Turkey, No. 313.

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apart from a few cursory references to public instruction, he deals entirely with industrial questions in England.*

At that time, however, the intellectual atmosphere throughout the Continent was to a great extent impregnated with English ideas, which, together with translations from and comments on English authors, chiefly into French, were gradually introduced into Rumania by those returning from the West, and also—in the case of printed matter—by means of book agencies, such as that of the Vlachs Marchidi Pulliu, established at Vienna.

From various sources one might gather the following works in their French editions: Lord Chesterfield's *Letters;* the same author's *Indian Philosopher*, rendered into Rumanian in 1831; Swift's *Gulliver*; Byron's *Don Juan;* Young's *Night Thoughts*, two translations of which appeared in Rumanian one after the other. How much one thought of Young, especially, is shown by the fact that in *Jalnica Tragodie*, a very long, tiresome epic on contemporary events, when the author finds out that his powers are not equal to his great subject, he exclaims in all seriousness: "But here I would need to let speak in my place Heraclite or Young!"

Among French writers it was Voltaire who, more than anyone else, contributed to the spread and knowledge of English ways of thinking in Rumania, as he did in other countries. He was becoming very popular, so much so that the Patriarch of Constantinople saw in this influence a danger to the Christian faith, and threatened "with the wrath of heaven" all those who read him.† From Voltaire's *Lettres Philosophiques* the Rumanian public must have first learned of men like Bacon and Newton. And I think Voltaire's high appreciation of Pope had induced an influential Moldavian writer, Costache Conachi, to attempt a translation, from a French version, of the *Essay on Man*

* The whole report is reproduced in Professor N. Iorga's *Histoire des Relations Anglo-Roumaines*, pp. 114–130, Iassy, 1917.

† Jean Louis Carra, *Histoire de la Moldavie et de la Valachie*, p. 219, Iassy, 1777.

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into a language which was not at all suitable as yet for such a purpose.

From a French rendering of Montagut and Letourneur, *Hamlet* was likewise translated for the first time. Its mounting upon the Rumanian stage on the night of the 2nd of October, 1884, was hailed as an event of high importance by all the leading papers. They dealt with it in numerous long articles, one of which concludes as follows: "The representation of *Hamlet* at the National Theatre is a triumph which means a great step on the way of our dramatic art."*

It appears that Manolescu, himself the translator, displayed not only fine acting, but deep understanding in his impersonation of Hamlet, which gave him the standing of an historical figure in the tradition of the Rumanian theatre; and it is in the rôle of Hamlet that he is represented to-day by a statue in the Athenæum at Bucharest.

Between the sixties and seventies a group of young men, newly returned from abroad, where they had completed their studies, founded at Iassy a society called "Junimea," which had subsequently a great and direct bearing on Rumanian literature. Its members used to meet at each other's house and discuss, or read from, various known authors. Among these we see mentioned Macaulay and Buckle, whose *History of English Civilisation* was just then attracting great attention.

At the very first meeting members were invited to hear the reading of a translation of *Macbeth* by Peter Carp, who was to become leader of the Conservative party. He published it afterwards, together with another of *Othello*, in book form. They both had the merit of being written in a rather good, clear Rumanian language and of having closely followed the original.

Besides other people manifesting a keen interest in Shakespeare, there was then Eminescu, the foremost representative of Rumanian poetry, who in the artistic embodi-

* *România Liberă*, October 7th, 1884.

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ment of a pessimistic view of life ranks with such poets as Lenau and Leopardi. His manuscripts, now at the Rumanian Academy, show not only that he was an assiduous reader of Shakespeare, but that he even intended to translate from the great dramatist. Now and then Eminescu alludes to Shakespearean characters, as, for instance, the grand picture of King Lear given in his poem *Emperor and Proletarian:*

> It seemed that through the air, in the starry night,
> Pacing on the top of the forests, on the splendour of the waters,
> With white beard,—on his darkened brow
> The straw-crown hanging withered,
> Passed on the old King Lear! . . .

There are verses in Eminescu, filled to the utmost with a deeply poignant sorrow, which might with good reason be compared with such famous passages of Shakespeare as that from *Macbeth:* "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow . . ." and from *Tempest:* "You do look, my son, in a mov'd sort . . ."; or *Hamlet's* "To be or not to be . . ."

This last monologue, no doubt, entered into his inspiration when he stood appalled, trying vainly to realise his own emotions, before a beautiful maiden's coffin, in *Mortua Est:*

> And then who knows whether it is better
> To be or not to be? But everyone knows
> That what does not exist, feels no pain—
> While pains in life are many, pleasures—few.
>
> To be? Sad and empty madness:
> The ear lies and the eye deceives one.
> What a century says the others unsay—
> Better nothing than a pale dream.
>
> I see embodied dreams chasing after dreams,
> Till they fall in open, waiting tombs,
> And I know not where to draw my thought:
> To laugh like fools? To curse or to cry? . . .

Or when he wrote *Midnight Chimes*—a rather curious but characteristic poem—where in the crowded compactness

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of six verses he sets forth the same dark, unsolved doubts regarding one's own existence:

> Chimes, in the midnight, the brazen bell,
> And Sleep, the customer of life, takes me no custom.
> On oft-trodden paths Death wants to bear me,
> To choose in weighing life and death together.
> But the balance of thought remains still unchanged,
> And between the two steady stands the tongue.

A follower of Eminescu, with a strong individuality of his own, Al. Vlahutză, had taken up the subject in a longer poem, *On the Threshold*—that is, the Threshold of Death—culminating in the verses:

> It is not death I dread, but its eternity.

Other members of the " Junimea " Society had occasion to come personally into touch with English life. The poet Alexandri, after the election of Cuza as Prince of both Rumanian provinces, was entrusted with a mission to London, where he arrived in February, 1859. He wrote at once to Lord Malmesbury, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, asking the favour of an interview, especially as he was the bearer of an autograph letter from Prince Cuza. Although the British Consul at Iassy, referring to Alexandri's mission, acquainted the Foreign Office beforehand of " the strong desire on the part of the Rumanians to be brought into a closer contact with England, on whose friendly assistance they based not a few of their hopes,"* Lord Malmesbury did not consent to see Alexandri except as a private person, with no official standing whatever. At first he even expressed himself in severe terms against the election of Cuza at the head of Wallachia and Moldavia, which, he said, disregarded the convention of the Great Powers and gave offence to Turkey. Yet, after having listened to Alexandri's explanations on the subject, Lord Malmesbury not only declared that England, as the home of

* Record Office: Consular Papers, Turkey, No. 36. The report is dated September 29th, 1895.

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liberties, could not oppose the free national development of another nation, but he assured Alexandri of his own support concerning the future of the Rumanian principalities.

In recording all this after nineteen years, Alexandri adds, in that subdued tone of things seen in the light of memory, some impressions of a Sunday in London, of Kew and Richmond with its parks, its variously built cottages, " its gardens descending down to the water with groups of trees, rounds of flowers, and green carpets of turf like velvet."*

As for the purely literary side of Alexandri, I mention only the fact that it was largely due to the widely awakened interest in Percy's *Reliques* that he was impelled to produce his own collection of *Folk-Poems*, the first of the kind in Rumanian, which was often afterwards referred to in connection with the *Reliques*—the clan organisation of the Highlander's life, as revealed in the latter, presenting much likeness to that of the Rumanians of old.

When Rumania came to be recognised as an independent State, her representative to the Court of St. James's was for a long time Ion Ghica, an able statesman and also a writer of repute. Many of his letters to Alexandri, which still make very pleasant reading, are dated from London. He tells in them of his frequent visits to the British Museum, where, as he puts it, " the history of the human genius rolls before one's eyes as in a panorama." We learn from the contents of one letter that he sent to the Rumanian Academy a book on the organisation of the Reading Room, to serve as a model for the Academy's library.† Other letters deal with such subjects as " Liberty," in which the ideas of John Stuart Mill are given prominence and discussed.

In what remains of his private library I found the following amongst other English books: *A Biography of Shakespeare*, by Charles Knight; *The Life and Genius of Shakespeare*, by Thomas Kenny; *Outlines of the Life of*

* *Convorbiri Literare*, XII., June, 1878.

† *Convorbiri Literare*, XXXVI., January, 1902. The letter is dated October 14th, 1885.

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Shakespeare, in two volumes, by J. O. Halliwell-Phillips; *A Shakespearean Grammar*, by E. A. Abbott; Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*. Such works must have been of real use to his son, Scarlat Ghica, who was educated in England and translated the *Merchant of Venice* and *Antony and Cleopatra* into Rumanian.

We now come to Maiorescu, the very soul of the "Junimea" Society, whose fine literary criticism had greatly contributed towards the true national development of Rumanian literature. To what excellent service he turned his knowledge of English authors will be seen from a few essential points of his essays.

First of all, at that time there were still prevalent in Rumania the Voltairean ideas of judging things separately, with no account as to their time and circumstances. Applied especially to the Rumanian language, they aimed at latinising it completely—a tendency the more dangerous as it was imbued with an exaggerated nationalism. Maiorescu opposed it vigorously, and succeeded in replacing all such ideas by sounder ones, himself led by Burke's historical method and that of the English evolutionists. Then he first propounded in Rumania the view that novels and short stories are apt to deal better with the peasantry, in so far as the latter could directly reveal their character, through their own speech and gestures, and not hiding it, like the upper classes, under the shields of a feigned reserve or social conventions. And by way of evidence, he pointed to Dickens's *David Copperfield* and other famous novels.

Further, Maiorescu, in order to illustrate some principles of poetry, put before the poets, then arising, various passages from Shakespeare, whom he held to be "the most perfect model for all that will ever be called poetical imagination."

Among other popular contemporary English authors, I would mention Walter Scott and Herbert Spencer. The historical novel of the former gave rise in Rumania, as throughout the Continent, to a score of productions in that

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vein, few of which, however, very few indeed, had enough real value to survive; among these are Negruzzi's story of *Lăpuşneanu*,* and Odobescu's *Doamna Chiajna*. The last one, in treatment, style, and character alike, bears resemblance to *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and testifies to the strong influence of Scott upon the Rumanian writer. As for Spencer, we find the philologist and historian Petriceicu-Hasdeu, a man of wide learning, trying to work out the ideas of the *Synthetic Philosophy* in his *Critical History of the Rumanians*. The second edition of the book is even dedicated to Spencer, in terms which appear to-day rather bombastic: "To Herbert Spencer, the profoundest philosopher of the nineteenth century"!

The same author prints as motto to his *History of the Rumanian Language* a passage in English taken from an article in the *Contemporary Review*.

This shows, of course, a sensible progress towards the immediate contact with English letters. The extent of it might be measured by a few lines from *Three Years in Rumania*, an impartial account, which appeared in 1878—that is, fourteen years after the foundation of "Junimea," when we first saw any attempt at such a contact. He says: "Nearly everyone belonging to the patrician class knows something of our tongue and there are men who read *The Times* daily, and whose acquaintance with our best authors would put no few of our fellow-countrymen to shame."†

I spoke of Maiorescu's literary criticism; but his professorial activity is also directly connected with my present purpose. For many years he expounded at the Universities of Iassy and Bucharest the modern English philosophy. He never wrote down his lectures, and no one has taken notes with a view to publishing them; I am, therefore, left here to my own student memories, out of which I will try to produce an outline.

* C. Negruzzi translated, no doubt from a French rendering, Thomas Moore's *Irish Melodies*.

† J. W. Ozanne, p. 150.

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Maiorescu always preceded his course with a general survey of English life and literature, so far as they could throw light on the most characteristic ideas underlying English philosophy. Then he started as a rule with John Stuart Mill, whose *Logic* served him as a basis for a little manual—the only good book of the sort used in our schools. He held Mill in great esteem, but as a follower of Kant he was at a loss to understand how such a lucid and penetrating mind as Mill's could refuse to admit any *a priori* ideas. And he entirely disagreed with Mill's assertion of all human knowledge, including pure mathematical axioms, being derived only from experience.

Although fully appreciating Spencer's vast attempt to account for the phenomena, if possible, by one all-embracing principle, Maiorescu could not reconcile it with the light, rather scornful treatment of metaphysics by the author of the *Synthetic Philosophy*. He often regretted Spencer's self-sufficiency, shown mainly in his refusal to read Kant.* But all Maiorescu's admiration and sympathies were with Carlyle, who afforded him the best opportunities for what constituted one of his great professorial merits—that is, the stimulation of thought, and cast into unexpected light small, familiar things, of no apparent significance whatever. Some of his lectures on Carlyle dwell still in the minds of those who attended them. In the last years the greatest number of theses presented by students for examination were concerned with Carlyle. So Maiorescu told me, and he added: "A thinker of Carlyle's sincerity can only do good to you, the younger generation."

It was, I suppose, the impression left by Maiorescu's lectures that made me visit, among the first things of interest on my arrival in London, Carlyle's house in Chelsea. An article I wrote about it in *Convorbiri Literare* brought me a prompt letter of encouragement from Maiorescu, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which he urged me at the

* Under the title *In Contra Socialismului*, Maiorescu translated Spencer's Introduction to the collection of papers, *Plea for Liberty*, published by Thomas Mackay in 1892.

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same time to take a long excursion through Middle England and Scotland.

"From my own experience," he wrote, "I would recommend you one or two days at Windermere—for the Lake poets—one or two days to Edinburgh, thence through Callander and the Trossachs to Glasgow. I have seen them all myself with such delight. Perhaps near Edinburgh you might search also for other of Carlyle's *Memorabilia*."

Though the writer of these lines has now passed away, I must apologise for quoting from a private letter; but it does show the interest in such matters up to an old age, crowded with Ministerial work, of a man whose ideas, whose expositions of English thinkers, formed part of the cultural asset of many a distinguished Rumanian writer.

It was a pupil of his, Constantin Antoniade, who published a monograph on Carlyle. It did not bring forward any new points of interpretation; but the author mastered his subject, and infused it with a personal warmth, which made it, as Professor Mehedintzi remarked, "echo throughout the intellectual class of the Rumanian nation."*

To what else might be ascribed this predilection for Carlyle? What was there in his work which, beyond any other English writer, contributed to his obtaining such currency?

First of all, it is the poet in Carlyle that mostly appealed to the Rumanian public. He often rises to the highest regions, where the boundaries between poetry and metaphysics disappear; they become one, and their united voice is the very voice of human destiny: Whence come we? To what end? What is the meaning of our life? His deeply felt passages in *Sartor Resartus*, throbbing with the perplexity of these queries; his repeated dwelling upon the sense of wonder, which, if kept alive, gives one a surprising joy in contemplating even simple, usual things; his references to silence—the vast, boundless, solemn silence of the skies as the symbol of a state in which great things are born—all these have again and again been quoted in Rumania.

* *Convorbiri Literare*, XLVIII., January, 1914.

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On the other hand, the leaders of the last generation, in attempting to render Rumanian literature more truly national, to keep it free from both the ridicule and dishonesty of politics, became preachers. In that respect, naturally, no writer was more suited to their frame of mind than Carlyle.

Take Professor Iorga. He learned much from Gibbon, yet his personality is more akin to and shows more of Carlyle's own tumultuous spirit, in his historical as well as in his purely literary works. How indebted he was to the author of the *French Revolution*, and in general to English literature, to the healthful breezes of which he always endeavoured to keep the doors of his country wide open, he avowed himself in a book, *Travel Notes*, published shortly after his participation, a few years ago, in the Historical Congress in London. Remembering the pleasure of his intellectual feasting on the first English books, mostly chosen from the shelves of the second-hand shops in Charing Cross Road, he writes:

"Through them I have penetrated into a far more original literature, deeper and more human, full of humour and tears."

And then in connection with some characteristic aspects of London:

"All these are for ever bound up in my mind with the field odours of Wordsworth, the eternal flights of Shelley, the romantic tales of Southey, the heroic adventure of Byron, down to the tender utterances of Tennyson, the large periods of Macaulay, and Carlyle's splendid, innovating pages of moral prophecy."

In the same trend of ideas one has also to consider the poetical creation of Cerna, who in profundity and width of range stands next to Eminescu.

I vividly recollect the time when I last saw him in Bucharest. For hours we sauntered along the quiet street

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talking literature. He was eager to know about the English poets of to-day, and whether any new tendencies were manifested in them, and who among the classics more fully enjoyed the favour of the public. He was himself well acquainted with the latter. His rapturous praises of Keats struck me especially—his persistent recurrence, with a kind of mystical bent, to Keats, as if he had a presentiment that the same fate in life was reserved for him. Indeed, he died young, from the same malady as Keats, and in a foreign land, while studying at Leipzig.

His letters published lately give here and there interesting glimpses of his concern with English literature. One of them tells how moved he felt at hearing read aloud in class Spencer's *Epithalamion.** From another letter we gather that he was mostly attracted by Professor Foster's course on English literature.

" Especially tender," he says, " and full of deep understanding, both of poetry and the human heart, his lectures on Elizabeth and Robert Browning seemed to me."†

Among the subjects submitted by him for a thesis we find *Hamlet*, also a parallel between Tennyson and Browning.‡ This tuition of English poetry has been a great stimulus to him. It is chiefly from the English masters of song that he absorbed and made his own that power of soaring to the higher realms of the imagination, where poetry has freer play and, taking a speculative turn, can revel in new, unthought-of similes between nature and the soul of man.

Take, for instance, this passage of one of his poems:

> When departing, she whispered: " To-morrow !"
> But my hand in hers for long remains.
> No word broke the sacred silence,
> Only from afar answered the whisper
> Tunefully, the flute of the nightingale.

* *Convorbiri Literare*, L., April, 1916.
† *Ibid.*, XLVIII., November, 1914.
‡ *Ibid.*, L., April, 1916.

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To-morrow! That is the murmur of felicity,
Which drives the seconds and moves the stars. . . .
To-morrow! Every corner of the world
Seems full of its echo.
Unroll swifter, O night,
On the way to eternity!
Why have I not the wings of the tempest,
To rise up to the multitude of stars
And extinguish them all in turn
With the beating of my wings—
To hasten the dawning of the blessed morrow!

Or this short poem bearing the title, *To the Expected One:*

Often, on the sea, the pensive moon,
Under the veil of clouds, silently glides.
The sea, however, feels it, and is stirred,
Roaring, rises all towards the moon.

In the horizon of the future lost,
So you float before me clad in mysteries.
While my soul seeks for you perturbed
And all my thoughts kiss you.

But, were you fated to be far from me,
And always shun me, as you shun death—
One prayer I have: when passing through my dream,

Stay near me, with a smile,
And closer press my eyelids,
That I should ever sleep and ever dream of you!

The English poets left Cerna even with some direct marks, easily to be detected. Thus in his poem *Night*, one meets the verses—I quote in Rumanian:

Și-atât de-aproape se priviau'n față
Că fiecare se vedea pe sine
In ochii celuilalt.

—which strongly savour of Byron's verses in *Don Juan*, canto II., stanza 185:

And saw each other's dark eyes darting light
Into each other. . . .

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The last two lines of a sonnet of his—

Doinind îmi smulse trandafirul vieţii,
Iar spinii i-a uitat în piept la mine

—are almost identical with those ending Burns's *The Banks of Doon:*

And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn with me.

Again, in a poem called *Separation* such verses as—

Şi spus-am ochiului meu trist: Priveşte! . . .
Şi spus-am braţului: Imbrăţişează!

—remind one of Romeo's final words in the churchyard:

. . . Eyes, look your last!
Arms, take your last embrace!

In searching further through Rumanian literature, one would more or less find the English influence or hints of it in the essays, with a pronounced socialistic tendency, of the critic Dobrodjeanu-Gherea; in the last writing of the poet Vlahuţă; in the brilliant historical trilogy produced by the novelist Delavrancea, and so forth. On the other hand, a newspaper like *Românul*, the organ of the Rumanians in Transylvania, and periodicals of the first standing like *Convorbiri Literare*, *Luceafărul*, and *Viaţa Românească*, considered it always a point of distinction to give translations from English authors. In the last-named review there appeared lately *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, one of the best renderings into Rumanian from Shakespeare, due to the practised and delicate pen of the poet Iosif.

Of course, good translations help a great deal. But whoever has tried conscientiously to turn foreign masterpieces into his own tongue knows how despairingly difficult —bordering on impossibility in the case of poems—this task is. One feels somehow that half of the charm of the original disappears. It is, therefore, earnestly desired that efforts

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should be made to expand the English language in Rumania more and more. And not only that; properly qualified men and women, possessing learning and enthusiasm, should go there and be, for the Rumanian public, worthy exponents of what is great, noble, and consoling in English literature. The results of any such attempts concern England not less than Rumania. For, doubtless, it is a matter of natural pride and content to see one's own language honoured by others; to see the very lords of that language, the truest spokesmen of the race—be they dead or alive—fully appreciated and admired elsewhere; to see their priceless golden thoughts and fancies, like Shelley's "winged seeds," taken by the winds to blossom forth in a distant country.

Then comes the humanising aim of literature—to bring about a communion of all those devoted to the things of mind, and, through them, to create those bonds of sympathy and mutual understanding which alone, and beyond any political and commercial relations, are of a really disinterested and lasting character between two peoples.

As for the Rumanian writers, I have no fear of their losing anything of their originality. It is only the poorly gifted who are influenced to the extent of becoming imitative. The strongest amongst them would be braced to greater achievements. And Rumanian literature would steadily grow up like a luxurious sacred grove, as those which the ancients chose for the abode of their gods. Rooted in the national soil, preserving in all its peculiar native freshness, under its shadow, through the richness of the foliage quivering in the sunlight, one would hear that high, profound, strange music which comes only through the contact with an older and far more developed literature than ours, such as the English is.

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